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VICTOR RIZESCU

Ideology, Nation and Modernization

Romanian Developments in Theoretical Frameworks

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IDEOLOGY, NATION AND MODERNIZATION

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Ideology, Nation and Modernization: Romanian Developments in Theoretical Frameworks

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DTP, machetarea şi concepția grafică a coperții
Emeline-Daniela Avram
Foto copertă: afiş al filmului artistic *AGORA*
(regia Alejandro Amenábar, 2009)
(*Sursă*: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agora_%28film%29)

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1. Introduction

When considered in relation to the western sources of modern social and political thought, ideological development in the countries of the East European borderlands can be described as having consisted primarily in a dynamics of acculturation or as having been driven mainly by a thread of reactions to the pressures of modernization. Historical accounts taking the first path will focus on the process by which ideological trends of western provenance have been entrenched – on the basis of contextual adjustments and after suffering corresponding distortions – in local cultural milieus, thus contributing to the refashioning of political cultures inherited from old regimes and traditional societies. When taking the second path, the historian will bring to the forefront a consideration of the historical nexus between the growing consciousness of living within the horizon of modernity displayed by educated strata and their increasing self-understanding as both integral parts of the global society and segments of local social units affected by the interconnectedness of international life. No matter how hard

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they strive to combine the two perspectives, historical approaches in the field are most often led to privilege one of them.

1. The component parts of the present book are no exception. The two chapters of Part III elaborate in outline a typology – placed in an appropriate comparative framework – of ideological patterns in the modern history of Romania, issued from the adoption and elaboration in the local setting of the various parts of the modern political spectrum. Chapter 7 ("Historical Canons and Eccentric Voices") thus delineates several stages in the evolution of local liberalism, in order to address, then, the national varieties of the left-wing (populist-peasantist, socialist and communist) ideological trends and the historical morphology of right-wing thinking belonging to the conservative, traditionalist and fascist generic families. Migration of ideas is surveyed, here, in connection to the underlying disparities of structural conditions between West and East, and regional patterns of intellectual transformation are disclosed as fully operating in the narrower Romanian context. A gradual drive to the Right of the liberal current of thought was certainly connected, as such, with the growing influence – accompanied by inescapable radicalization issuing into fascism – of the right-wing forms of ideological pleading themselves, with the doctrine of corporatism – locked in a competing flirtation with fascism – strayed across the liberal tradition and that of conservative nationalism (yet mainly evolving from within the fold of modernizing authoritarian liberalism). While liberal thinking is vindicated as more variegated than canonical interpretations presented it so far, the Right is discovered as less pervasive than it is usually deemed, to the same extent as the Left is depicted as exercising a greater diffuse influence over the various compartments of politics and culture than we are accustomed to think about it. Ideological traditions of western provenance did not merely get embodied in clearly cut local ideological groups, but they also got employed as

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intellectual instruments suited to addressing specific contextual puzzles and put to work for different ideological purposes. The most obvious case is definitely that of Marxism, discovered as pervasively operating in such a guise and as incorporated in three forms of liberal social and political theory and in at least one significant expression of traditionalism, besides staying at the basis of the three recorded varieties of the Left. The Marxist original inspiration of the populist agrarian trend is argued against a strangely persistent tendency to deny or disregard it.

Chapter 6 (”Subverting the Canon”) introduces this typology by both a closer examination of the varieties of pre-communist liberalism and a deeper consideration of the interpretative canons in the history of Romanian ideologies. The subject of the local forms of liberalism is once again treated as a core one within the domain of studies involved, this time with more precise reference to cultural fashions and historiographical traditions that have nurtured the tendency to disregard it as unproblematic, in favor of the related emphasis on the development of right-wing cultural and ideological trends. The need for a reconsideration of the Left, together with a renewed interest for understanding, in a post-communist frame, the social and economic dimensions of pre-communist ideological constructions, are vindicated alongside the same pleading. Liberal thinking is approached by taking a new look at its conjunction with westernizer advocacy and modernist projects of social change. The established interpretative view on the topic is found as patterned in the 1970’s and the following two decades by the works of Z. Ornea, written from the standpoint of a sociologically informed approach to the history of literary currents, but approximating a broadly conceived analysis of ideological trends (and despite the fact that the author himself has never been truly established as a canonical figure of exegetic literature). When contributing heavily to the consecration of Ştefan Zeletin and Eugen Lovinescu – the

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two foremost westernizer defenders of Liberal Party policies of modernization from the interwar era – as classics of national ideological correctness (a pervasive opinion in the scholarship, although disseminated for a wider public to a lesser extent after the demise of the communist regime than before that moment), Ornea also drew their historical and sociological insights into the body of contemporary secondary literature produced in the field of Romanian intellectual history, with a marked tendency to disregard the need for clarifying their status as actors of the very same history (a tendency rapidly magnified in school and university textbooks and in a large welter of popularization works).

Interwar liberal modernists argued as both defenders of Enlightenment rationalism against traditionalist culture of Romantic progeny and spokesmen for the necessary adaptations of the liberal doctrine and practices in the context of peripheral modernization and delayed state building. Ornea, in his turn, appropriated their Enlightenment advocacy – most usually branded as "modernism" by himself and his fellow exegetes – as part of a new surge of opposition against the culture of anti-western nationalism, following the refurbishment of the later in the context of communism. His inability to come to terms with the peculiar brand of liberalism that Zeletin and Lovinescu had advanced in connection to their westernizer and modernist stance was largely dependent, for sure, on the ideological limitations imposed by the same communist context. The chapter engages on redressing these drawbacks of the prevailing interpretation. Zeletin's and Lovinescu's arguments designed to ascertain the soundness of interventionist economic practices and moderately authoritarian politics disguised as standard constitutional parliamentarianism in the Romanian context of delayed and accelerated development – anticipated by A. D. Xenopol, a pioneer of protectionist economic theory, more prodigious as a historian than his two followers yet less ready to cast his historical accounts as legitimizing

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narratives – are set in opposition to the wide ranging critical culture eager to demolish the credentials of mainstream liberalism of acting in resonance with the national interest and in accordance with the demands of modernization over the long run. In conjunction to the vindication of a high degree of theoretical soundness and empirical accuracy on the side of precisely that brand of social criticism that standard modernists scorned as immersed in traditionalist prejudices, there is set here the baseline for the larger typology of ideologies advanced in the following chapter (summarized above), by delineating, alongside the only liberal-modernist ideological attitude retained so far by the interpretative canon, two minority liberal stances. Manifested primarily in the guise of "anti-oligarchic modernism", they criticized Liberal Party liberalism on account of either its falsification of free-trade wisdom and of the premises of philosophical individualism – as in the case of H. Sanielevici, Ştefan Antim, George Strat and a score of other voices connected with a hitherto neglected, but very significant periodical of the 1930's – or of its reluctance to embark upon democratization and welfare policies, in faithfulness to the spirit of oppositional Left-liberal rhetoric of the 1848 revolution era – as in the case of the Durkheimian sociologist Dumitru Drăghicescu.

2. Precisely the other approach mentioned above is followed in Part II. The search here is for disclosing the contours of an intellectual structure forged during the XIXth and the early XXth century Romania and induced by the growing perception of the disruptive changes brought about by modernization under the impact of western and world capitalist influences. Previous attempts to recover in this way the main thrust of the Romanian reflection on the consequences of modernizing change have tended to be channeled into an effort of discovering the local pedigree of Latin American dependency theory and of neo-Marxist

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world-system theory. This time, an exercise in the archeology of ideas applied to the Romanian record of social criticism and sociological analysis – itself intertwined with political and economic theoretical pursuits and practical advocacies – has as its main objective that of bringing to light the pre-communist critical sociologies of the elites, discovered as closely connected with the sociological evaluations of the successive stages of the modernizing process and also as staying at the very core of the entire effort to come to terms with the predicament of modernization. Chapter 5 ("Paradigm Change in Critical Sociology") discloses a sociology of the Romanian ruling elite as having a bureaucratic – non-feudal and non-capitalist – nature, elaborated from the 1870's to the 1940's by critics of the prevailing social and political realities with various ideological orientations. As described here, the theory in question was meant to explain the failures of modernization by reference to the peculiar type of social stratification it had brought about, and also to give account of the truncated capitalist development by reference to the social entrenchment of statist policies – originally designed as instruments of accelerated change – and of the class interests staying behind the distortions of the same policies.

Shown as very original by comparison to influential turn-of-the-century theories of the elites – like those of Max Weber and Robert Michels – the Romanian intellectual construction thus recovered is also identified as highly significant in connection to the dilemmas of post-communist social transformations. More sophisticated restatements of the same theory are discovered within the body of post-war modernization theory, development studies and comparative studies on the world-wide – and particularly East European – modernization. It is also underlined that, in the latter context of scholarship, such analyses of bureaucratization have arisen as an integral part of a paradigm change leading from the original unilinear view of modernization promoted by

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western historical sociology (connected with an understanding of change as necessarily generated from bottom up, under the stimulus of spontaneous transformations in the sphere of economic and social relations) to the discovery of various modernizing routes (allowing for state-induced, top down patterns of social change). As the intellectual turning point in question was anticipated by peripherally located social critics of late XIXth century Romania, its present Romanian academic perception is contextually bound by the strong cultural memory of those past intellectual accomplishments.

While underscoring, thus, both the originality of national social thought and the continuing force of its cultural heritage, the chapter nevertheless provides proofs pointing to a strange phenomenon of persistent cultural forgetfulness: no matter how strongly linked it was with the view of multilinear modernization and state-driven social change – that has never ceased to be celebrated as a Romanian intellectual innovation, before and after its consecration as an internationally celebrated revolutionary shift in the social sciences – the theory of bureaucratization was rejected in the 1940's as part of the ideological departure of communism from the body of social-democracy, and it has never been recovered ever since as an established rubric of local sociological wisdom. Chapter 4 ("A Divide over the Oligarchy") takes a deeper look into this episode of intellectual history, identifying the early XXth century efforts to theorize the bureaucratic class, or to deny its existence, as the best vantage point for distinguishing between the main ideological uses Marxist sociology was put to in pre-communist Romania: alongside the populist, socialist and communist such contextual interpretations, a rubric is devoted here to the Zeletinian attempt to enlist the revolutionary vision on behalf of an apology for the liberal policies of oligarchic-led modernization, by the means of an argumentation strongly recalling that of German "socialism of the chair" and of Russian "legal Marxism".

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The interconnection between the critical sociology of modernization and of the modernizing elites and larger concerns of ideological advocacy was not a preserve of Marxist thinking at the time, nor was bureaucratization the only concern of the Romanian intellectual engagement with the connection between local social stratification and international currents of social change. The historical account advanced here also tackles another story of Romanian social criticism, having as the main object the efforts of (critically) understanding the nature and function of the landholding elite inherited by the modernizing society from the pre-modern centuries. The competing ideological biases of such efforts are shown as no less powerful than those manifested by the various interventions in the debates on the bureaucratic oligarchy, and the mark left by past ideological stakes on the historiography of the agrarian issue and of feudalism is discovered as painfully obvious up to the present day. Besides, looking at the interplay between the ways the landholding class was indicted and the ways the bureaucratic predicament was then decried yields into a better understanding of ideological change, elaborated in the following chapters of the book, previously summarized. A major threshold in the intellectual history of Romania is identified to have taken place the 1860's, with the liberal discourse – hitherto acting as an oppositional one targeting the feudal oligarchy as responsible for social inertia – leaning to the Right and starting to act as a governmental force, appropriately adjusting itself to suit the requirements of its new political function, and the conservative discourse – previously acting as a reinforcement of existing power arrangements – migrating towards an oppositional stance and discovering the sociology of bureaucratization as a polemical device leveled against the liberal camp.

3. Together with the sociological insights into the workings of modernization, the reflections on the issue of

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nation building and the redefinitions of national identity in relation to cultural change induced by western influences stood as the most important threads stretching through Romanian ideological dynamics. In their turn, all these closely related fields on inquiry were articulated around the center-periphery dichotomy (although they did not always rest on an accurate understanding of it, and neither did they always employ it in a consistent fashion). Accordingly, an appropriate re-reading of the record of intellectual history targeted in the four chapters summarized above requires fresh departures in the field of nationalism studies, alongside others of the kind revolving around an up-to-date conceptualization of the peripheral status of Romania. The two chapters of Part I are meant to offer precisely such a methodological, theoretical and comparative orientation.

The post-communist drive away from isolationism could have only brought the national question at the center of public interest. As a response to the persistent dilemmas arising from this interest, chapter 3 (“Some Distinctions within a Classical Distinction”) takes the hugely influential distinction between the civic and the ethnic understandings of the nation as both a baseline and a searchlight for a wider survey of the relevant literature. Drawing on the liberal nationalist and liberal multicultural reconsiderations of national identity from a normative philosophical standpoint – including their underlying reconsideration of the civic nation as unavoidably encompassing cultural links between its members, besides the merely civic ones maintained by the sternest proponents of this sanitized version of nationalism as alone congruent with the premises of liberal democracy – the chapter argues in favor of observing the necessary disjunction between national communities and citizenries. To support this view, it vindicates the relevance of disclosing a subtle difference between French and English traditions of thinking about nationhood, alongside the paradigmatic French-German

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opposition around which the dichotomous classification of the varieties of national allegiances was originally shaped. There goes together with this an emphasis upon denying the validity of the rigid classifications of real national communities in the world as either civic or ethnic in character, on the basis of references to recent historical and comparative surveys that have discovered nationalist discourses close to each of the two ideal-typical models coexisting side by side, or else succeeding each other recurrently, in the same state and national settings. Again by reference to the relevant literature, doubts are also raised regarding the deeply entrenched conception relying on a strict correlation between the civic-ethnic distinction and the West-East differentiation between political cultures and political traditions.

Stretching through this entire series of dissociations there can be grasped a sustained recent tendency of giving a more positive retrospective evaluation of the historical liberal nationalist views supporting nation building projects than it was customary for some time in the standard literature. The revisionist trend of scholarship thus identified does apply extensively to the East European cases, and its influence is manifest in the body of all the other chapters of the book, each time reference is made to the statist-based and nationalist-legitimated adaptations of liberalism in the Romanian and other contexts of delayed modernization. The chapter also has, however, another, more explicit and better highlighted target. Against the tendency, very marked in post-communist public and academic discourses, of pointing to melting pot policies, sustained by the civic model of the nation and almost unqualifiedly embraced up until very recently by most of the western liberal democracies, as universal panacea of inter-ethnic and nationalist tensions, a pleading is advanced for acknowledging that the prevalence of full blown, yet fragmented, territorially dispersed and deeply intertwined national groups has constituted for a long time, in Eastern

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Europe, a predicament hard to reconcile with the same policy demands and (nakedly) civic-inspired theoretical wisdom. A recommendation for allowing that in the region, as a general rule, citizenries comprise representatives of more than one nation goes together with the same pleading, which is entrenched by brief references to the history of misleading regional attempts at civic-based nation building, as well as of persistent prejudices against the recognition of minority corporate identities and the conception of group-differentiated rights (with a special reference to the comparison between Hungary of the Dualist period and post-1918 Romania, remarkably similar in this respect).

As already hinted at above, Romanian social and economic thought of the late XIXth and the early XXth century was undeniably precocious in identifying significant differences between western and peripheral patters of modernizing social change. Thinking against the background of agrarian backwardness allowed local innovative minds to coin valuable pieces of theorizing on the matter in advance of the findings of western comparative social science. Yet, although this intellectual tradition has always survived in some compartments of the academia, national culture as a whole has displayed a strange stubbornness in refusing to subscribe to the idea of the country as holding a peripheral identity, eventually accepting it very reluctantly. Most of historical studies fully participated to these last cultural tendencies, which could have only been strengthened due to the surge to European Union enlargement and integration – naturally emphasizing the European identity shared by all the countries of the continent involved, from West to East – after communism. Chapter 2 (“Romania as a Periphery”) takes issue with this long-standing national inclination of conflating a heuristic instrument with a stigma identity, also taking account of the partial – and temporary – departure of western social sciences themselves from the center-periphery theorizing, that followed after a long and fruitful

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enthusiasm for it. Shaped in the milieu of a German-Romanian academic exchange, the pleading developed here for fully intimating and further deepening the heuristic value of the set of ideas invoked underscores the undeniable heuristic function that the notion of the *Sonderweg* – relying to the same extent as that of "periphery" on a stark comparison between local and (more) western historical trajectories – has performed in German historiography. Arguments are also advanced in favor of dissociating the idea of periphery from its privileged association with neo-Marxist world-system analysis alone, with a corresponding emphasis on neo-Weberian perspectives of the kind.

A search for elaborating a methodological and theoretical framework for a consistent historical approach to ideological development in a peripheral setting could have only gone together with the pleading thus summarized. The guidelines set here – briefly restated in the last chapter of the book – warn against the temptation of treating the subject in a barely "diffusionist" guise, arguing instead for paying at least the same attention to the ideological reactions taken by non-western cultural groups towards the dissemination of western intellectual trends as to the migration of ideas itself. A stricture is made for allowing that western ideological constructions can be discovered to have acted, at the periphery, not only as adjusted re-embodiments of the same stances and under the same labels, but also as intellectual tools employed for ideological purposes specific to the peripheral context alone. Cultural criticism applied to the transformations of national identity in confrontation with the stream of acculturation and social criticism concerned with social-economic dislocations brought about by modernization are discovered to have played more significant roles as structuring factors of ideological change than political and constitutional ideas of a normative nature, and the need to disclose the autonomous functions performed by the two types of criticism is underlined to the

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same extent as the requirement of understanding the connection between them. In full accordance with the previously mentioned revaluation of the liberal nationalist projects of peripheral nation building, nationalist ideas are here acknowledged to have occupied a more prominent place on the ideological agendas of the peripheries than on the western agendas of the kind. Finally, it is argued that, far from leading to the internalization of a stigma, a methodology resting on the demand of taking the center-periphery distinction seriously when treating ideological development can only be conducive to better appreciating the originality of non-western contributions to the record of global cultural change, while also allowing a deeper understanding of the West-East intellectual interconnections.

4. Four of the following six chapters are slightly revised and updated versions of previously published articles. Five of them contain arguments entirely or partly delivered at international conferences taking place in Romania, Moldova and the Unites States. The elaboration of the last two chapters benefited from the hosting of New Europe College, Bucharest (once in association with the Romanian Academy). All chapters revolve around a PhD dissertation defended at the Department of History of the Central European University in Budapest, and meant to take a new approach to Romanian ideological development from the 1860's to the 1940's, by circumscribing as the main thread of research the relation between the evaluations of the state of modernization advanced by individual thinkers and ideological groups over the period considered and their critiques of the elite held as responsible for the failures of the same modernizing process. The articles brought together in the first part of the book were written as preliminaries meant to clear the ground for the dissertation, while the texts collected in the remaining two parts arose as sequels of it. The engagement

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with the topics treated here has been naturally linked with the striving to come to terms with the much larger subjects developed in courses taught all throughout, in Romanian and in English, at the Department of Political Science of the University of Bucharest. Thus, the bibliographical survey and the clarifications brought in chapter 3 significantly inform a course with the title "Nationalism and Citizenship: Theoretical and Comparative Perspectives", in the same way as the findings of chapters 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7 are easily recognizable as parts of the courses entitled "Traiectorii ale modernizării. Modele teoretice şi perspective est-europene" (also taught once at the Department of History of the same university), respectively "Gândire politică românească" and "Modern Political Thought in Eastern Europe". To the extent that the traces of a sustained effort to take an appropriately balanced view – against the long-term cultural tendencies and fashions of post-communism – to Marxism (as both a revolutionary doctrine and an instrument of sociological and historical interpretation), to the (primarily Marxist) revolutionary culture of the last two centuries and to the political and ideological Left can be detected in the pages of the book, they also resonate with the content of a course entitled "Revolution and Social Conflict in History".

The task of cutting a right academic path through the cultural tendencies mentioned above has been more demanding than this work alone would allow the reader to understand. Anyone interested to find out more is therefore referred to another book by the same author: *Tranziții discursive. Despre agende culturale, istorie intelectuală şi onorabilitate ideologică după communism*, Bucureşti, Corint, 2012. The diagnostic of the Romanian post-communist cultural space advanced there – pointing to its deep fragmentation combined with the proliferation of simplistic deconstructionist stances taken towards a cultural heritage burdened with the memories of nationalism, fascism and communism – is fully maintained here. As shown with that occasion, the entrenchment

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of such stances has had the perverse effect of bestowing public respectability upon dilettantism, also confining to narrow audiences the attempts to construct genuinely critical departures – finely balancing well-deserved continuity and necessary rupture – from the academic patterns, cultural trends and symbolic hierarchies elaborated during the decades of communism and before them. To convey a sense of the difficulties encountered by those efforts, the book mentioned adopted a part-documentary composition. It is maybe of significance to underline that no intention of the kind presided over the decision of composing the present book as it stands. It is also of some use, moreover, to inform the reader that the present balance sheet of an approach that has had to proceed in a fragmentary fashion for longer than originally expected will be rounded up by bringing together some other pieces in a new volume, designed to be published under the (still prospective) title *Canonul şi vocile uitate. Secvenţe dintr-o tipologie a gândirii politice româneşti* (initially planned to bear another title).

Both the notion of a balance sheet and the invocation of past difficulties easily recall the appropriateness of looking back for acknowledgements. As this can only be done selectively, the author likes to privilege the most distant debts he incurred over the much more numerous recent ones. Mentioning several persons who guided or influenced him during his undergraduate, MA, doctoral and postdoctoral studies at the University of Bucharest, at the Central European University and at Oxford University is the best way to approximate the accomplishment of such a difficult task. Among the Bucharest-based people, the names of Sorin Antohi and Bogdan Murgescu immediately come to mind, and they have to be accompanied by those of Jacek Kochanowicz, Laszlo Kontler and Alfred J. Rieber from CEU and of Richard J. Crampton from Oxford. It is no way to avoid supplementing this short list with the names of several people who, over the years, reacted warmly to

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appeals for clarification and repeatedly offered insights and moral support: Daniel Chirot from the University of Washington, Seattle, the late Florin Constantiniu from the Romanian Academy, Andrew C. Janos from the University of California, Berkeley and Paschalis M. Kitromilides from the University of Athens. It would be difficult, however, to resist the temptation of broadening this evocation such as to include the entire community of late and living significant contributors to several relevant and related fields – and especially to the field of the history of Romanian and East European political, social and economic ideas – whom the author has never met but whom he grew accustomed to fell as intimate friends. They are innumerable, but Z. Ornea and Andrzej Walicki must certainly be counted among them.

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Part I

NATIONALISM AND THE PERIPHERAL PREDICAMENT

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2. Romania as a Periphery: Social Change and Ideological Development

Comparative development studies with a focus on East European modernization are surveyed here in order to draw (tentative) general statements regarding the dynamics of ideological change in a peripheral setting. Long-standing regional – and particularly Romanian – prejudices towards conceptualizing local historical evolution on the basis of the "center-periphery" dichotomy are opposed, with special attention paid to their refurbishing in the post-communist cultural and ideological environment and in connection to the broader alterations of paradigms after the Cold War. The debate on Eastern Europe as a periphery – again, with an emphasis on Romania – is related to the academic discussions

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about the German historical peculiarities conducive to Nazism. Pre-communist ideological trends are highlighted as prodigiously original on the side of the insights they produced into the patterns of peripheral social change, and the prevalence of nationalist concerns they exhibit is itself disclosed as intrinsic to the predicament of intellectual evolution in non-western contexts. Although with a hindsight it emerges as somewhat too ambitious, the theoretical and methodological frame outlined here does inform the engagements with the same issues in the following chapters.

1. It has long been customary in western and especially American scholarship on Eastern Europe to describe the region as a periphery of the West. At the time of decolonization, several decades after the Paris Peace Settlement, when "East European studies" had already become an old-established academic domain, and "Third World studies" were just emerging as a burgeoning new one, some analysts in the West discovered that these two areas of research could shed considerable light on each other, and correspondingly the concepts and theoretical models elaborated for the understanding of each of them had to prove their validity by being tested against the other one as well. As one scholar wrote:

> The recent history of Asia, Africa and Latin America has shown that many phenomena previously considered to be specifically East European were not so at all, but merely characteristic of the impact of western influences on non-western societies. […] These developments place the history of Eastern Europe […] in a new perspective, which the observers in 1914 could hardly have foreseen. […] The wider interest of Eastern Europe's history lies in those aspects of social and cultural development in which it resembles or differs from the history of Western Europe on the one side and of the non-European, "under-developed" countries on the other. But to see these resemblances and differences it is necessary […] to see the real social forces, without preconceived notions of the universal validity of Victorian categories.[1]

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[1] Hugh Seton-Watson, "The Intellectuals and Revolution. Social Forces in Eastern Europe since 1848", in Richard Pares, A. J. P.

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The image of Eastern Europe as the "first under-developed area", and as a laboratory suited for studying the effects of the westernization of the world became deeply entrenched, so much so that the region started to be used as a training-ground for American diplomats specializing in Asian and African affairs.[2] Behind that part of its heritage that Eastern Europe undeniably shares with the West – and regardless of the traditional infatuation of the East Europeans with their European identity – we have to distinguish – as it was argued – structural features that make the comparison with non-European regions more meaningful, and scientifically more rewarding, than the comparison with the western half of the European continent. New analytical instruments were required for making this comparison effective, and for replacing the obsolete "Victorian categories", and they were forged accordingly, most often being placed in the conceptual rubric of "periphery". These instruments were employed for building social science models and historical explanations that contrasted the evolution of the West to that of the peripheral world, of which Eastern Europe, over the last several centuries, was considered to be a part.

Of course, not even within the American academic circles has this view been universally accepted. Some authors who have tackled big issues of social and political development in Eastern Europe tended to ignore the demand for a special set of concepts and theoretical models, maintaining (or implying) that the evolution of the area could be conveniently grasped by employing the conceptual

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Taylor, eds., *Essays Presented to Sir Lewis Namier*, London, Macmillan, 1956, pp. 429-430. See also Idem, "Neither War Nor Peace: the Struggle for Power in the Post-war World", New York, Praeger, 1960.

2 Henry L. Roberts, "Politics in a Small State: The Balkan Example", in Charles Jelavich, Barbara Jelavich, eds., *The Balkans in Transition*, Hamden, Conn., Archon Books, 1974 [1963], p. 378.

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apparatus originally forged for the study of western societies.[3] Some others have maintained that, while we have to distinguish between different paths that societies might take during the transition from the agrarian, traditional world to modernity, the same theoretical models could account for any such variety of modernization processes, whether in a large or in a small country, in the East as well as in the West. Thus, the three routes to modernity identified by a scholar like Barrington Moore on the basis of broad comparisons between the largest western and Asian societies could be found replicated inside the belt of small East European states, in spite of Moore's own suggestion that the decisive factors in the evolution of the small countries lie outside their borders, and as such societies of the kind are not appropriate to be taken as independent units of research.[4]

Scholars who did share the view mentioned above have identified a pattern of modernization in the area displaying successive stages of evolution that have to be seen not as equivalents of the developmental stages followed by the West, but as mere distortions of them. For some authors of the kind, who have taken a (however qualified) "world-system" or "dependency" approach, such distortions are to be blamed on the perverse influences of the world capitalist

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[3] Cyril E. Black, "Russia and the Modernization of the Balkans", L. S. Stavrianos, "The Influence of the West on the Balkans" and Traian Stoianovich, "The Social Foundations of Balkan Politics, 1750-1941", all in Charles Jelavich, Barbara Jelavich, eds., *The Balkans in Transition*, Hamden, Conn., Archon Books, 1974 [1963], pp. 145-183, resp. 184-226, 297-345. See also Cyril E. Black, *The Dynamics of Modernization. A Study in Comparative History*, New York, Harper, 1966.

[4] Gale Stokes, "The Social Origins of East European Politics", in *East European Politics and Societies* 1: 1, 1986, pp. 30-74. See also Barrington Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, Boston, Beacon Press, 1967, pp. 413-483.

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market centered in the West, and explained by reference to the intrinsic mechanisms of global capitalism.[5] This view does not raise any more such an enthusiastic approval as it used to attract during the last decades of the Cold War, and successive critical departures towards it have been taken within the field of comparative modernization studies.[6] Still, the very notions of "core" and "periphery" are often seen as a preserve of it. They smack of mere militant neo-Marxism and of an ideological denunciation of the plutocratic nations with an anti-western slant. As it has often happened in the history of ideas, the tenets of a wider school of thought have come to be associated with one particular variety of it alone. Hence, the conceptualization of the region as a "periphery" tends to be suspiciously rejected in post-communist Eastern Europe, where liberal and (renewed) westernizer circles are careful to take a critical distance from dependency theory, perceiving it as coming in the same package with the indigenist and illiberal form of nationalism.

Although equally concerned with the distorted nature of East European modernization, other scholars place the

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5 Daniel Chirot, *Social Change in a Peripheral Society. The Creation of a Balkan Colony*, New York, Academic Press, 1976. See also Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Capitalist World-economy. Essays*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1979; Thomas R. Shannon, *An Introduction to the World-system Perspective*, sec. ed., Boulder, Colo., Westview Press, 1996.

6 Theda Skocpol, "Wallerstein's World Capitalist System: a Theoretical and Historical Critique", in *The American Journal of Sociology* 82: 5, 1977, pp. 1075-1090; Charles Ragin, Daniel Chirot, "The Modern World System of Immanuel Wallerstein. Sociology and Politics as History", in Theda Skocpol, ed., *Vision and Method in Historical Sociology*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984, pp. 276-312; Daniel Chirot, "Causes and Consequences of Backwardness", in Daniel Chirot, ed., *The Origins of Backwardness in Eastern Europe*, Berkeley, The University of California Press, 1989, pp. 1-14; Idem, *How Societies Change*, sec. ed., Los Angeles, Sage Publications, 2011.

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blame for it not on the inescapably perverse influences of world capitalism, but on the strategies and policies that the regional elites have developed in order to meet the challenge of modernization or, in more general terms, on the responses of peripheral societies at large to this challenge.[7] On this view, Eastern Europe has been transformed into a periphery precisely because of its eagerness to catch up with the West at an accelerated pace and without the required prerequisites. While in the West modernizing change has run its course as an organic process, issuing from spontaneous transformations in the realm of economy and society, on the periphery the driving force has been the desire to imitate – or "emulate" – western civilization. While in the first model the modern state only emerged as a consequence of changes in the infrastructure, in the second one the political superstructure of the western type was erected first, in the absence of corresponding social foundations, and assigned the role of the main instrument of social change. The sequence of development was thus reversed, leading to the ascendancy of the state over all aspects of social life, and to the hypertrophy of its

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7 Andrew C. Janos, "The One-party State and Social Mobilization: East Europe between the Wars", in Samuel P. Huntington, Clement H. Moore, eds., *Authoritarian Politics in Modern Society. The Dynamics of Established One-party Systems*, New York, Basic Books, Inc., 1970, pp. 204-236; Idem, "The Politics of Backwardness in Continental Europe, 1780-1945", in *World Politics* 41: 2, 1989, pp. 325-358; Idem, *East Central Europe in the Modern World. The Politics of the Borderlands from Pre- to Post-communism*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2000. For the neo-Weberian pedigree of this perspective see Reinhard Bendix, "Tradition and Modernity Reconsidered", in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 9: 3, 1967, pp. 292-346. Another comparative perspective on modernization issuing from the same school of historical sociology: Liah Greenfeld, *The Spirit of Capitalism: Nationalism and Economic Growth*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 2001.

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bureaucracy. While in the core countries the category of state officials was recruited from different segments of society, and mirrored the class-division of society, produced by the dynamics of economic forces, in peripheral countries bureaucracy became an interest group in its own right,[8] and the states "became instruments of revenue raising as well as of income transfer from the societies at large to the new bourgeoisie of state officials", or else instruments of "income equalization, not, to be sure, between the various economic strata of peripheral societies, but between the elites of the backward and the advanced industrial societies of the continent".[9] Some trappings of parliamentarianism were adopted as a façade, but the peripheral political class "integrated the administrative and parliamentary systems into a single machine in which the bureaucracy was in charge of manufacturing safe majorities whose votes provided legitimacy for the essentially bureaucratic regime",[10] a machine which "enabled the bureaucratic arm of the government, usually under liberal and progressive labels, to turn out predictable majorities, thereby debasing parliamentarianism without abandoning it".[11] The attempt to imitate the West was followed by equally futile attempts to find a shortcut to the modern society of affluence through

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8 Seton-Watson, "The Intellectuals and Revolution", p. 397; Henry L. Roberts, *Rumania. Political Problems of an Agrarian State*, Hamden, Conn., Archon Books, 1969 [1951], pp. 338-339; Janos, "The One-party State and Social Mobilization"; Joseph Rothschild, *East Central Europe between the Two World Wars*, Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1974, pp. 19-22.

9 Janos, "The Politics of Backwardness in Continental Europe", pp. 338, 342.

10 Idem, "Modernization and Decay in Historical Perspective: the Case of Romania", in Kenneth Jowitt, ed., *Social Change in Romania, 1860-1940. A Debate on Development in a European Nation*, Berkeley, University of California, Institute of International Studies, 1978, p. 87.

11 Idem, "The Politics of Backwardness in Continental Europe", p. 342.

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an authoritarian, corporatist political design,[12] or by spasmodic attempts to reject the western model, as in the various fascist movements. The inter-war years witnessed the confrontation of – and reciprocal contamination between – these two political orientations.[13]

As the "dependency" view is increasingly rejected for the indictment of the West that it carries with it, so the perspective of "emulative modernization" has recently come under attack for the depreciation of non-western societies that it (allegedly) implies. Some of its critics have confined themselves to protesting against the extension of the theory over some of the historical cases that it claims to cover, arguing with empirical evidence against it.[14] Some others, however, have raised doubts about the very "dichotomy in the patterns of social and political development" that was originally formulated "to explain the nature of social and political change in the contemporary Third World and [...] later expanded to the historically underdeveloped regions of Eastern Europe", and which claimed that "there [were] more similarities in the realm of politics between the [...] countries of the European 'periphery' in the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries and the contemporary Third

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12 Idem, "The One-party State and Social Mobilization", pp. 213-214; Philippe C. Schmitter, "Reflections on Mihail Manoilescu and the Political Consequences of Delayed-Dependent Development on the Periphery of Western Europe", in Kenneth Jowitt, ed., *Social Change in Romania, 1860-1940. A Debate on Development in a European Nation*, Berkeley, University of California, Institute of International Studies, 1978, pp. 117-139.

13 Janos, "Modernization and Decay in Historical Perspective", pp. 102-113; Idem, *The Politics of Backwardness in Hungary, 1825-1945*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1982, pp. 201-312; Nicholas M. Nagy-Talavera, *The Green Shirts and the Others. A History of Fascism in Hungary and Romania*, Stanford, Hoover Institution Press, 1970, pp. 345-375.

14 Alan Sked, *The Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire, 1815-1918*, London, Longman, 1989, pp. 202-205.

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World than between any of them and the West".[15] Such ideas, which are indicated here as constituting, together, much rather a piece of received wisdom than a scientific view, seem to be rejected as just another variety (albeit a rather subtle one) of the western "Orientalist" and hegemonic discourse.[16]

Actually, East European scholars have always been very reluctant to accept a "peripheral identity" for their societies, despite some occasional enthusiasm for the neo-Marxist dependency theory.[17] So deeply ingrained is the notion that the region has always been – and has to be conceived as – an integral part of European civilization, that the suggestion of looking to India or Brazil in order to better understand Hungary, Romania or Bulgaria tends to be perceived here as yet another proof of the (still) rather exotic character of American academic fashions, or else as a testimony for the resilient lack of "historical sense" on the part of social scientists of all persuasions. The drive to

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15 Diana Mishkova, "Modernization and Political Elites in the Balkans before the First World War", in *East European Politics and Societies* 9: 1, 1995, pp. 63-89, esp. pp. 64-65. Some authors changed significantly their views regarding the validity of historical comparisons between pre-communist Eastern Europe and the post-war Third World: see Joseph Rothschild, *The Communist Party of Bulgaria*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1959, respectively Idem, *Pilsudski's Coup d'État*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1966.

16 Compare Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, sec. ed., Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009.

17 An occurrence of the kind: Ilie Bădescu, *Sincronism european şi cultură critică românească*, Bucureşti, Ed. Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică, 1984. Compare Ivan T. Berend, Győrgy Ránki, *The European Periphery and Industrialization, 1780-1914*, transl. by Eva Pálmai, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1982; Jacek Kochanowicz, "The Polish Economy and the Evolution of Dependency", in Daniel Chirot, ed., *The Origins of Backwardness in Eastern Europe*, Berkeley, The University of California Press, 1989, pp. 92-131.

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European integration could have only estranged local scholars further from subscribing to this way of thinking. For sure, there continue to be heard some (mainly western) voices who highlight the relationship between the "peripheral" past of the region and its present predicament.[18] Within the region, however, much more common are attempts to understand its historical heritage by employing conceptual and theoretical frameworks tailored for making sense of European historical realities alone and resting heavily on intra-European comparisons.[19] Given all these, it seems likely that the tradition of thinking invoked will end as a casualty of the profound change that the social science paradigms have suffered since the end of the Cold War, being driven to the grave without ever being examined in full detail in the East, as also without being reconsidered, in the light of present developments, in the West.

2. A comparison between the notion of the peripheral status of Eastern Europe and that of a German "special path" of historical evolution might be in order at this point. Some decades ago, a British and an American historian took a famous intervention in the German academic debate on the *Sonderweg*.[20] They pointed to the fact that the idea of German

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18 Andrew C. Janos, "Continuity and Change in Eastern Europe: Strategies of Post-communist Politics", in *East European Politics and Societies* 8: 1, 1994, pp. 1-31; Idem, *East Central Europe in the Modern World*, pp. 329-406.

19 An influential model (although itself informed by core-periphery analysis): Jenő Szűcs, "The Three Historical Regions of Europe", in *Acta Historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 29: 2-4, 1983, pp. 131-184. Compare Ivan T. Berend, "The Historical Evolution of Eastern Europe as a Region", in Ellen Comisso, Laura D'Andrea Tyson, eds., *Power, Purpose and Colective Choice. Economic Strategy in Socialist States*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1986, pp. 153-170.

20 David Blackbourn, Geoff Eley, *The Peculiarities of German History. Bourgeois Society and Politics in Nineteenth-century*

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abnormal development over the long run, as it was customarily understood at the time, rested on an over-enthusiastic adoption by German historians of some (mainly) Anglo-American social science theories (of the kind offered by such scholars as Alexander Gerschenkron, Barrington Moore or Ralf Dahrendorf[21]) and on their eagerness to take the historical experience of England, France and the United States as a rigid standard against which the experiences of all other societies in the world had to be measured. Beyond their narrower concern with Germany, they raised general questions regarding both the limits of social science paradigms as heuristic instruments for historical studies and the appropriateness of invoking the particular historical evolution of the westernmost countries as a canon of "normal" development. Their declared aim was not that of rejecting the idea of German peculiarities altogether, but that of disclosing the contours of a scientific orthodoxy, establishing the connections between various components of it that were not always perceived as being connected as such, of bringing to light certain views that were circulating as not fully articulated presuppositions and of reworking them in order to obtain a more accurate historical picture. They addressed in the first place a German, and not an Anglo-American audience, discovering that the importation of ideas across the Atlantic had augmented their distorting implications.

If measured with the western yardstick, countries like Romania – and the others placed to the East of Germany – are

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Germany, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1984. See also Jűrgen Kocka, "Asymmetrical Historical Comparison: the Case of the German *Sonderweg*", in *History and Theory* 38: 1, 1999, pp. 40-50.

21 Alexander Gerschenkron, *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective. A Book of Essays*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1976 [1962]; Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*; Ralf Dahrendorf, *Society and Democracy in Germany*, London, Weindelfeld and Nicolson, 1967.

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less likely to appear as strikingly peculiar (although a variety of long term historical evolution conducive to totalitarianism has been claimed for the case of Russia[22]), but rather as instances of a developmental pattern characteristic of the non-western world generally. The notion of "periphery" can be seen, therefore, as a suitable counterpart of the German *Sonderweg* in the field of East European studies.[23] For sure, East European scholars cannot be said to be less prone to a fascination with (more) western academic fashions than their German colleagues, who subscribed in large numbers to the idea of the *Sonderweg* (interpreted in negative terms[24]). Therefore, we might have expected the same kind of clarifying intervention from outside in the local debate concerning a peripheral pattern of change pertaining to the region to be long overdue. We can easily notice that it is not, at least as far as Romania is concerned. The explanation might be rather that the notion has always been used only reluctantly, as carrying the connotations of a stigma identity, than the fact that the traps inherent in employing it have already been avoided. At a time when the Romanians (as the East Europeans generally) are claiming their European identity more eagerly than ever, and are protesting more forcefully then ever against any attempt by outsiders to project another identity on them, it might prove useful for them to take issue with a view which claims that the structural similarities between this region and Latin America, Asia or Africa have been stronger, over the last two centuries, than the cultural links with the larger European commmunity.

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22 Richard Pipes, *Russia under the Old Regime*, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1974. See also Richard Hellie, "The Structure of Russian Imperial History" in *History and Theory*, Theme Issue 44, 2005, pp. 88-112.

23 Kocka, "Asymmetrical Historical Comparison".

24 On the previous, positive interpretation of the same idea see Blackbourn, Eley, *The Peculiarities of German History*, pp. 2-4.

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The remaining part of this article will also try to argue that the historical picture of Romania as a periphery should not have the embarrassing overtones that it most usually has for educated Romanians and that a certain dignity could be ascribed, after all, to the condition of being "peripheral".

3. While no sustained attempt at probing international theorizing about the peculiarities of peripheral development on the basis of fresh research has been advanced by recent Romanian scholarship, they do seem to be supported by the Romanian social thinking of the period predating the Second World War. Contemporary interpretations of peripheral politics can only obtain further credibility from the fact that virtually all the elements which they put together can be identified, at least in a crude form, and of course differently arranged, across a large spectrum of Romanian (proto-)sociological utterances from the past that display, otherwise, various ideological preferences. At the same time, such past Romanian social critics and theorists are retrospectively infused with additional respectability, once it is thus established that their core intellectual concerns are still wholly relevant and legitimate nowadays, and besides emerge as essentially different from the corresponding basic concerns of classical social and political theory elaborated in the West. For sure, statements of this kind are not made for the first time. Theoretical and comparative studies on modernization produced over the last decades did often stress their partial indebtedness to non-western views on the same issues coming from older times, and emphasize that some of the backbone ideas of present-day development theory were anticipated in the context of pre-communist East European ideological debates.[25]

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[25] Daniel Chirot, "Neoliberal and Social Democratic Theories of Development: The Zeletin-Voinea Debate Concerning Romania's Prospects in the 1920's and Its Contemporary Importance", in Kenneth Jowitt, ed., *Social Change in Romania, 1860-1940. A*

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However, it could be argued that some larger implications of such connections have not been elaborated upon to the full. Recent perspectives on East European modernization – supported, as said, by older Romanian approaches to the peculiarities of belated development – hold that, when trying to give account of the process of social change on the global scale, "we deal not with a single process, but with two different processes: one, the process of innovation in the Occident; two, the gradual diffusion of these innovations from the core area to the peripheries of the world system".[26] Accordingly, "as the dynamics of these two processes vary considerably", it is a task incumbent to us to "identify two different patterns of social and political change",[27] or else "to develop a general paradigm for the study of peripheral politics".[28] An implication regarding the need for a corresponding paradigm appropriate for studying the evolution of social and political ideas in peripheral countries (and for the analytical tools suited for disclosing it) might be drawn from this. Indeed, granted that "the domestic political activity" in countries like Romania "is understandable only as a variety of responses, involving the copying, modification, or rejection of western political and ideological models, to the social and political dislocation that growing contact with the West has brought about"[29], and acknowledging – in more general terms – that, when studying modernization, we deal with both "the rise of a successful material civilization in a handful of countries" and "the responses of the rest of the world to this particular and ongoing process",[30] we are led to ask questions regarding

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Debate on Development in a European Nation, Berkeley, University of California, Institute of International Studies, 1978, pp. 31-52.

26 Janos, *The Politics of Backwardness in Hungary,* p. 313.

27 *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

28 Janos, "Modernization and Decay in Historical Perspective", p. 74.

29 Roberts, *Rumania*, pp. VI-VII.

30 Janos, "Modernization and Decay in Historical Perspective", loc. cit.

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the peculiarities of the *intellectual* response to the expansion of western civilization[31] in peripheral countries like Romania.

"Ever since their emergence as an independent nation the Romanians have been preoccupied, almost obsessed, with the nature of their relation to the West".[32] It would be definitely unfair to say that this obsession has not been paid much attention from the part of historians of ideas. But we still need a better understanding of how was thinking on the relation to the West articulated with other ideological patterns, and of how should we retrospectively assess its relevance as a factor contributing to the general dynamics of Romanian culture. To the same extent as the scholars of political history, the intellectual historians vacillate between approaching the realities of a peripheral country on the basis of analytical tools originally forged for the study of western phenomena and trying to replace or supplement them with instruments especially designed for their new task. Too often historians treat the intellectual debate on the periphery as only a translation of the western one and endeavor to ascertain local counterparts for every intellectual category or cultural formation displayed by western history. Thus, notions like "liberalism", "conservatism" or "socialism" are often applied to non-western evolutions without any serious search for a specific conceptualization of the local ideological dynamics.[33] Giving account of ideological development

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31 See, in this connection, Traian Stoianovich, "The Pattern of Serbian Intellectual Evolution, 1830-1880", in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 1: 3, 1959, pp. 242-272. Although hugely comprehensive, the work of Randall Collins, *The Sociology of Philosophies. A Global Theory of Intellectual Change*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1998, hardly gives a clue to an understanding of peripheral ideological dynamics applicable to pre-communist Eastern Europe.

32 Roberts, *Rumania*, p. 339.

33 See, otherwise, Victoria F. Brown, "The Adaptation of a Western Political Theory in a Peripheral State: the Case of Romanian Liberalism", in Stephen Fischer-Galati et al., eds., *Romania*

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in a peripheral country would then be tantamount, according to this approach, to understanding the process of acculturation and tracing the diffusion of cultural idioms and political discourses from the western metropolis to the cultural colony.

There is also the opposite temptation: that of treating western-induced ideological labels featuring in the non-western public discourse and the declared ideological commitments of political groups operating in such contexts as mere disguises for the always pressing concern of the relation to the West. Although sometimes consciously trying to strike a middle ground between the two stances, scholarship in the field informed by a comparative perspective has refrained from spelling out the basic principles of a specific conceptualization applying to peripheral ideological development, in connection to the patterns of peripheral social and political transformation characteristic to a peripheral society.[34] A modest proposal of the kind – drawing on the Romanian case of the XIXth and the first half of the XXth century – is advanced in the following.

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between East and West, Boulder, Colo., East European Monographs, 1982, pp. 269-301.

[34] Suggestions for such an approach can be taken from Joseph L. Love, *Crafting the Third World. Theorizing Underdevelopment in Rumania and Brazil*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1996, which occasionally speaks about "Third World ideologies", exemplified by the Romanian case over the period stretching from 1880 to 1945. For a shorter statement see Idem, "Theorizing Underdevelopment: Latin America and Romania, 1860-1950", in *Review* (of the "Fernand Braudel Center") 11: 4, 1988, pp. 453-496. Very insightful in this respect: Chirot, "Neoliberal and Social Democratic Theories of Development"; Idem, "Ideology, Reality, and Competing Models of Development in Eastern Europe between the Two World Wars." in *East European Politics and Societies* 3: 3, 1989, pp. 378-411.

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4. Once we accept that the languages of political thought[35] in peripheral areas are primarily shaped as reactions to the challenge of westernization, addressing as such different predicaments than western political languages, we can give a new assessment to the problem of ideological diffusion: indeed, while western political thinkers define their attitude towards modernity in the terms of their own culture(s), their non-western counterparts define their attitude towards the West by employing notions of western provenance. Depending on the context, they pick up various components of the western welter of intellectual traditions, using them as instruments required for interpreting the local predicament. Accordingly, we have to draw a distinction between two types of public discourses featuring in peripheral societies: first, local political languages, basically defined by reference to the process of modernization on the western model; and second, "interpretative languages", that is intellectual traditions – or particular mixtures of them – borrowed and adapted as instruments serving the purposes of the contextual ideological competition, while also enabling its participants to inquiry meaningfully into the conditions of backwardness and the mechanisms of development.[36]

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35 This is to vindicate a history of peripheral ideologies following the demand of conceiving "the history of political theory not as the study of allegedly canonical texts, but rather as a more wide-ranging investigation of the changing political languages in which societies talk to themselves": see Quentin Skinner, *Liberty before Liberalism*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 105. See also Richard Tuck, "History of Political Thought", in Peter Burke, ed., *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1995 [1991], pp. 193-205.

36 Thus, for example, Marxism at the periphery has acted less as a political ideology in its own terms than as an intellectual instrument – that is, an "interpretative language" – with the help of which various peripheral political languages could be structured. Most characteristic are populism and social-democracy,

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both of them acting primarily as forms of theorizing about the proper way for a backward country to adopt western institutions and social structure (see Michael Kitch, "Constantin Stere and Rumanian Populism", in *The Slavonic and East European Review* 53: 131, 1975, pp. 248-271; Idem, "Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea and Rumanian Marxism", in *The Slavonic and East European Review* 55: 1, 1977, pp. 65-89). Other significant examples can also be invoked. Ştefan Zeletin was a liberal according to Romanian criteria – in so far as he defended a strategy of modernization/westernization best incarnated historically in the practices of the Romanian Liberal Party. But to achieve this task he made use of an interpretative language which employed heavily the Marxist historical sociology: see Roberts, *Rumania*, pp. 114-115; Chirot, "Neoliberal and Social Democratic Theories of Development"; Love, *Crafting the Third World*, pp. 46-50. The distinction between interpretative languages used for making sense of local conditions of delayed modernization and peripheral political languages could also help us to avoid such confusing practices as that of classifying the corporatist Mihail Manoilescu sometimes as a "modernist" or a "westernizer" (categories which are themselves equated most commonly with "liberal"), and belonging together, as such, with thinkers like Eugen Lovinescu; and at other times as a "fascist" or "extreme-right" theorist (categories most often equated with "traditionalist" or "anti-western"), and belonging together, as such, with political writers like Nichifor Crainic or Nae Ionescu (see Z. Ornea, *Anii treizeci. Extrema dreaptă românească*, Bucureşti, Ed. Fundației Culturale Române, 1995, pp. 24, 265-283). Manoilescu's stance (common to most other corporatists of the region) can best be described as a modification of the mainstream Romanian liberal ideology and practice, whose major rationalization had been given by Zeletin. He was pleading for the same old aim of emulating the West, only recommending a different strategy, and using a slightly different interpretative language. His views did not involve any general rejection of western "rationality", as in the case of the traditionalists. At most, they involved an overestimation of it: see Roberts, *Rumania*, pp. 192-198; Schmitter, "Reflections on Mihail Manoilescu"; Brown, "The Adaptation of a Western Political Theory in a Peripheral State", p. 292; Love, *Crafting the Third World*, pp. 71-98. The presence or the absence of a certain

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Political theory in the West operates at two levels: the explanative and the normative. It advances evaluative-normative statements and policy prescriptions on the basis of historical-sociological descriptions and explanations. The connection between facts and values, or between explanations and norms, has been a central philosophical concern of modern western philosophy. On the periphery, evaluative judgments and philosophical-normative theorizing tend to play a different role, as values and norms come together with the overall western model of development, after having acquired prevalence in the West at a certain historical juncture. Accordingly, political theory is here primarily concerned with elaborating historical and sociological analyses meant to ascertain the degree of compatibility between the imported model and the local conditions. They try to establish, furthermore, whether westernization has proceeded appropriately, leading to the desired results, or has been pursued on a distorted pattern, failing as such to bring forth the promised benefits. On the basis of such factual inquiries, ideological pleading moves on to the prescriptive issues involved in the objectives of modernization (philosophical dilemmas regarding the nexus between explanations and norms being themselves of a lesser significance). The retrospective understanding of past ideological utterances has to classify and asses them by reference to their ability to formulate perceptive insights into the consequences of modernization and far-sighted prescriptions for developmental policies.[37]

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interpretative language can lead to the existence or non-existence of certain typical attitudes towards the West. Thus, the fact that the Latin Americans were less acquainted with Marxism than the Romanians can help explain the more belated emergence of peripheral ideologies in the Latin American case: see Love, "Theorizing Underdevelopment", p. 478.

37 Different normative positions could be advocated by reference to one and the same assessment of the current state of

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A further difference between western ideological development and the unfolding of ideologies on the periphery is predicated on the somewhat different roles played by nationalist ideas and concerns in the two contexts. Nationalist thinking – and the very modern concept of the "nation" – emerged in the West, in connection to the process of modernization, against the background of a medieval and early modern body of political theorizing elaborated on the basis of such non-nationalist notions like the "individual", "society" and the "state". No matter how great significance they have acquired meanwhile, nationalist principles acted as secondary ingredients to the philosophical project of modernity, much rather than as fundamental constituents of it. The tension between Enlightenment universalism and national particularism has itself been constitutive to the dialectical evolution of western political thought over the past two centuries. By contrast, in peripheral settings nationalist concerns tend to act as the generative principle of all ideological discourses.[38] Political debate in peripheral societies that have entered the orbit of western influence draws on the absorbing preoccupation with the relationship between indigenous cultural traditions and the western model. Concepts like "individual", "society",

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modernization, as was the case with the Romanian social-democrats and populists: see again Kitch, "Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea and Rumanian Marxism", pp. 75-77.

[38] Some wide-ranging approaches to East European nationalism informed by a center-periphery perspective: Peter F. Sugar, Ivo J. Lederer, eds., *Nationalism in Eastern Europe*, Seattle, The University of Washington Press, 1969; Peter F. Sugar, *East European Nationalism, Politics and Religion*, Brookfield, Ashgate, 1999; Paschalis M. Kitromilides, *Enlightenment, Nationalism, Orthodoxy. Studies in the Culture and Political Thought of Southeastern Europe*, Aldershot, Variorum, 1994; Idem, *An Orthodox Commonwealth. Symbolic Legacies and Cultural Encounters in Southeastern Europe*, Aldershot, Variorum, 2007.

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"state", or "universal mankind" are inherent in the latter,[39] and they tend to be invoked as secondarily relevant for shaping further the trajectory of modernizing change. Instead, ideological pleading tends to privilege cultural systems and symbolic legacies – however are they labeled, as "western" or "eastern", "Catholic" or "Orthodox" – as main references for envisioning the national future.[40]

Any sustained effort of understanding the relationship between the national community and the modernizing process centered in the West gets mainly channeled, in peripheral societies, on two lines of inquiry and discoursive development: that of cultural criticism, focused on national identity under the impact of acculturation; and that of social criticism, focused on social and economic change in the frame of world capitalism, as constituting the hard core of

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[39] This also holds true for the idea of the nation, including its basic varieties. This is why the perspective proposed here does not imply subscribing to the practice of distinguishing between a western (civic) and an eastern (ethnic) form of nationalism. For classical formulations of this distinction, see: Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism. A Study in Its Origins and Background*, New York, Macmillan, 1961 [1944], pp. 455-576; John Plamenatz, "Two Types of Nationalism", in Eugene Kamenka, ed., *Nationalism. The Nature and Evolution of an Idea*, London, Edward Arnold, 1976, pp. 22-36. Also the typology of nationalist movements in Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1990 [1983], pp. 88-109. See, however, Andrzej Walicki, *The Enlightenment and the Birth of Modern Nationhood. Polish Political Thought from Noble Republicanism to Tadeusz Kosciuszko*, Notre Dame, Ind., The University of Notre Dame Press, 1989, p. 5: "It would not be too difficult for a critic of Kohn's theory to demonstrate that all the characteristics which he regards as specific to Central and Eastern European nationalism could also be found in Western Europe".

[40] French and German models could thus be often invoked in the same way as normative for the process of modernization/ westernization: Lucian Boia, *Istorie şi mit în conştiinţa românească*, Bucureşti, Humanitas, 1997, pp. 186-194.

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the westernization process. As historians, literary critics, philosophers of culture or folklorists emerge as more vocal and influential in the public space than political and legal theorists when addressing issues of the first sort, so economists and sociologists do the same when problems of the second kind come on the agenda.[41] The interplay between the two strands of the ideological development is as significant as the distinction between them. Indeed, one and the same peripheral political language can display different attitudes towards the western cultural model and, respectively, towards the world-economy dominated by the West.[42]

5. Such an energetic vindication of the need and legitimacy of approaching ideological and cultural developments in Romania and Eastern Europe on the basis of a sharp "center-periphery" dichotomy might sound strange and misplaced in the end. Once again, however, this attempt to grasp the peculiarities of peripheral ideological evolution is meant to underscore the originality of cultural and social critics in non-western settings, while at the same time drawing a framework appropriate for getting deeper historical insights into the same innovative endeavors. Emphasizing the difference of kind – not just of degree – between the two discursive contexts goes together with a

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[41] Many times they are treated separately, as for example in Chirot, "Neoliberal and Social Democratic Theories of Development"; Love, *Crafting the Third World*, respectively in Katherine Verdery, *National Ideology under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceauşescu's Romania*, Berkeley, The University of California Press, 1991; Idem, "National Ideology and National Character in Interwar Romania", in Ivo Banac, Katherine Verdery, eds., *National Character and National Ideology in Interwar Eastern Europe*, New Haven, Yale Center for International and Area Studies, 1995, pp. 103-133.

[42] As exemplified by the various liberal, "neoliberal", populist-peasantist or corporatist ideological currents in Romania and in other East European countries.

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new emphasis on the fact that ideological debate on the margins of Europe evolved in the pre-communist period as a response to the same kinds of challenges that Third World intelligentsias and western specialists in development studies came to confront after the Second World War. The occasional re-readings of the East European welter of thinking on social modernization and cultural change as anticipating later trends in the comparative historical sociology of modernization were mainly inspired by the emergence of dependency theory and of neo-Marxist world-system analysis in Latin America and the United States, and accordingly they revolved around the effort of disclosing the pedigree of the latter trends.[43] Proving that a way of thinking has a venerable ancestry does not prove anything about its validity, however, and critics of the same intellectual trends could easily argue that it is precisely this ancestry which can raise doubts about the theories in question: far from offering any new insights into workings of the present-day international economy, and far from posing any original challenge to mainstream economic wisdom, they would have to be seen as just the refashioning of nefarious preconceptions, whose origins stretch back to the very beginnings of capitalist and industrial development, and which have been associated, at times, with reprehensible political stances.[44] A more comprehensive re-reading should thus go beyond the occasional occurrences of the rudiments of dependency theory, in order to disclose an overall intellectual framework that for the first time circumscribed and addressed coherently the broad problem of globalization, alongside that of the encounter between western and non-western societies.

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[43] See, again, Chirot, "Neoliberal and Social Democratic Theories of Development"; Love, *Crafting the Third World*.

[44] Gavin Kitching, *Development and Underdevelopment in Historical Perspective. Populism, Nationalism and Industrialization*, sec. ed., London, Routledge, 1989, pp. 18-61, 142-157.

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The current landscape of political theory has recently been described as shaped by the fusion – arising from conversational exchanges – between the western canon and the various non-western traditions encountered by the former during its expansion.[45] Drawing on the Romanian case placed in a regional comparative view, the perspective proposed here on the dynamics of ideologies and political languages on the periphery is intended as an analytical tool for better understanding the centuries-long conversation between the colonizer and the colonized.

[45] James Tully, *Strange Multiplicity. Constitutionalism in an Age of Diversity*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995. See also Siep Stuurman, "The Canon of the History of Political Thought: Its Critique and a Proposed Alternative", in *History and Theory* 39: 2, 2000, pp. 147-166.

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3. Some Distinctions within a Classical Distinction: Revising the Civic-Ethnic Dichotomy against the East European Background

On its descriptive side, the distinction between a civic and an ethnic conception of the nation has been applied to East European history and politics primarily with a view to underscoring the strong and long-term impact of exclusionary nationalism on local political cultures. Also in connection to the region, the same dichotomy has most often been used normatively in order to advocate the implementation of melting pot policies as closely approximating as possible the standard western ones. A full awareness of the intricacies displayed by the analytical tool in question has most of the time been lacking. The paper surveys precisely those

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intricacies, taking advantage of the recent surge of innovative works on the topic, as well as on the related ones of the philosophical significance of national identity and of the normative approaches to multiculturalism. After thus making several distinctions within the civic-ethnic distinction, it argues that the melting pot model sustained by the principles of civic nationhood and informed by western historical experience has never squared well with the regional predicament. Acknowledging this is important, whatever precise institutional designs targeting the local multicultural puzzles might otherwise be adopted.

1. The opposition between a civic/political/contractual and an ethnic/cultural conception of the nation is one of the intellectual tools most widely used in any attempt to come to terms with the problems of national identity and of nationalist politics and ideology. It is generally considered today as the most convenient device that can be used for distinguishing between the varieties of nationalism that are deemed compatible with the basic framework of liberal-democratic political life and others that are seen as conducive to various forms of authoritarianism. As such, it has been adopted as a yardstick for measuring both the policies of the states towards individual citizens and minority groups, and the demands of minority groups towards states. It has also become a very popular academic device in post-communist Eastern Europe, where it is usually taken as offering the final (theoretical) answer to all basic questions regarding the relationship between citizenship and ethnicity.[1]

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[1] Michael Ignatieff, *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism*, New York, Farrar, Strauss & Giroux, 1994; C. A. Kupchan, ed., *Nationalism and Nationalities in the New Europe*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1995; Rogers Brubaker,

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As already hinted at in the very first sentence above, the two parts of the dichotomy go under various names. However, most commentators agree that, whatever the exact words employed, the ideas involved are always much the same. The civic nation is an association which can be theoretically reconstructed on the model of the social contract. It is constituted by virtue of the individuals' agreement to comply by certain shared values that are constantly renegotiated in public life. The ethnic nation is constituted by virtue of a combination of elements that stand beyond the volition or control of individuals, like descent, language or (even) religion. According to a remarkably clear and thorough recent presentation, the opposition invoked is that between a conception of the nation that is "artificial, universalist and [...] individualist" and another one that is "particularist", "collectivist" and "organicist". The civic, or political, or contractual definition of the nation

> is deemed artificial because the nation is considered the product of a free association of individual wills which, on the basis of rational discussion, has reached an explicit or implicit consensus around publicly proclaimed principles and their institutional embodiment. It is universalist in the sense that, in principle, individuals can become citizens of the nation, provided that they agree to submit to the laws that reflect the underlying compact. Finally, [...] [it] is individualist in that, as it is formed of the confluence of separate wills, the individual (in terms of his or her existence, integrity or interests) can be said to precede the collectivity in a chronological and ontological sense. The implication is that one is an individual first, an abstract exemplar of humanity dissociated from all particular attributes; and that one's social determinations, whether those of ethnicity, gender, class, family, or status, are without relevance to the determination of one's national citizenship. In

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Nationalism Reframed: Nationalism and the National Question in the New Europe, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996.

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> this sense, nationality does not, strictly speaking, constitute a social determination, for it remains contingent upon individual's accord. And it follows that the nation itself is to be considered a contingent fragment of abstract humanity.
>
> By contrast, the [ethnic or] cultural nation is defined less by an original accord than by a common relation to some combination of historical memory, geography, kinship, tradition, mores, religion, and language. [...] The conception is particularist in that each nation is unique and can be neither generalized nor imitated. It is collectivist in that it claims that individuals cannot live outside society (and by extrapolation cannot live a complete life outside the society of their birth). In the contractual conception the individuals constitute the nation, but here the nation is said to form the individual (and possible to constitute individuality as a national trait). Finally, it is organicist in the sense that the national society, and the individual citizen's attachment to that society, are said to be rooted in determinants that lie beneath that surface of reason and volition provided by the nation's laws – and therefore beyond the individual citizens' cognition and control.[2]

However, although it seems unproblematic – and it looks like our sole task is to carefully identify the specific cases pertaining to each of the two species of nationalism –, the civic-ethnic distinction carries with it a great array of confusions, which manifest themselves when it is used in political or academic argumentation. As such, a danger exists that it can act as the very opposite to what it has originally been intended for: it might hamper the effort of forging democracies in the region instead of supporting it. By drawing on recent literature on the topic, the present paper aims to disclose some of the assumptions that currently go together with the civic-ethnic dichotomy in daily political rhetoric, and sometimes in scientific discourse. In other words, it tries to make some distinctions within the "civic

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[2] Brian C. J. Singer, "Cultural versus Contractual Nations: Rethinking Their Opposition", in *History and Theory* 35: 3, 1996, pp. 310-311.

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nation"-"ethnic nation" distinction. Definitely, the issues briefly touched in the following can get further elaborations. The main target here is to carefully delineate them.

2. The first distinction refers to the way the two varieties of nationalism are located on the world political and cultural map. It is customary not only to consider that two basic conceptions of nationhood featured throughout the historical record of modern times, but also to look at the civic and ethnic conceptions as constituting defining characteristics of the western and the non-western societies, respectively. The *locus classicus* of the dichotomy is a comparison between the French and German views of national belonging. In the aftermath of the war of 1870, scholars like Ernest Renan and Heinrich von Treitschke argued over the ambiguous nationality of the inhabitants of Alsace and Lorraine. The Frenchmen claimed them on behalf of their country by virtue of their explicit consent, while the Germans maintained that their Germaneness was conspicuously proved by their blood, language, customs and mores. Although at the time the Germans got the upper hand and the two provinces were annexed to the second *Reich* for the following five decades, the ideological struggle was won by the French: Renan's essay "What is a nation?" of 1882 – with its famous definition of the nation as a "daily plebiscite"[3] – was to establish itself very soon as the canonic expression of the civic conception. The German conception was accordingly consecrated as a remnant of tribalism and a hinder to political modernization. In 1907, the German historian Friedrich Meinecke took over the challenge and, in his monumental book *Cosmopolitanism and the National State*, subscribed to the distinction between "cultural" and "political" nations at the factual level, while denying its

[3] Ernest Renan, "What is a Nation?" [1882], in Homi Bhabha, ed., *Nation and Narration*, London, Routledge, 1992, pp. 8-22.

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normative relevance: in his view, the two views must be seen not as placed in a hierarchical relationship, but as relying on irreconcilable philosophical premises and embodying ethical-political values with equal claims to validity.[4] Meanwhile, the civic conception had been traced back to the English-French Enlightenment and the French Revolution, and made coextensive with an individualist worldview, while the cultural conception had been traced back to Herder and the German Romanticism, and made coextensive with a holistic worldview. Decades before Meinecke, the sociologist Ferdinand Tőnnies had already argued that the individualist "society" and the holistic "community" constituted equally sound models of human association.[5]

The debate over the two conceptions of nationhood was fuelled by the two world wars, and what had come to be seen as primarily a German doctrine was further compromised with the defeat of German militarism in 1918, and again in 1945. At the same time, what had originally been merely a French-German debate emerged as an influential topic of scientific inquiry throughout the western world. The search was on now for a rigorous way of delineating, on the general map of the nationalist phenomenon, those parts that could not be made compatible with the rules of modern and civilized political

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4 Friedrich Meinecke, *Cosmopolitanism and the National State*, transl. by Robert B. Kimber, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1970. For other streams of the German reflection on the national question in the same period: Alfred Pfabigan, "The Political Feasibility of Austro-Marxist Proposals for the Solution of the Nationality Problem of the Danubian Monarchy", in Uri Ra'anan et al., eds., *State and Nation in Multi-ethnic Societies. The Breakup of Multinational States*, Manchester, Manchester University Pres, 1991, pp. 53-63; Zenonas Norkus, "Max Weber on Nations and Nationalism: Political Economy before Political Sociology", in *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 29: 3, 2004, pp. 389-418.

5 Ferdinand Tőnnies, *Community and Society*, transl. by Charles P. Loomis, East Lansing, Michigan State University Press, 1957.

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conduct, and that were to be correspondingly expelled from the social-cultural body of established or emerging democracies. By enlarging upon the French definitions, the civic model was found to characterize not only French political culture but also – and for some authors even to a greater extent – that of the other core and westermost countries of the western civilization, namely Britain and the United States. In two famous texts published in 1918 and 1922 respectively by two British authors – Alfred Zimmern[6] and Lewis Namier[7] – the German idea of the nation was contrasted to the entire western tradition of civic or political nationalism. Increasingly, however – and connected with the redrawing of Eastern Europe's map according to the principle of national self-determination and with the first stirrings of nationalist demands in the areas of European colonization[8] – the western view of the nation came to be opposed now not only to the German one, but also to what started to be described as an "eastern" conception of national belonging. In an influential short book by Namier, the failures of mid-XIXth century democratic revolutions in Central and Eastern Europe were blamed on the clash between liberal-democratic principles and the linguistic nationalism – of the same sort as the German one – of the peoples inhabiting the area[9]. The German way was discovered now as setting the pattern for the evolution to independent nationhood and unified statehood of all the European national groups to the East of Germany, and of

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6 Alfred Zimmern, *Nationality and Government: With Other War-time Essays*, London, Robert M. McBride, 1918.

7 Louis Namier, "Nationality and Liberty" [1922], in *Vanished Supremacies. Essays on European History, 1812-1918*, New York, Harper & Row, 1963, pp. 31-53.

8 Alfred Cobban, *The Nation-state and National Self-determination*, London, Collins, 1969; Elie Kedourie, ed., *Nationalism in Asia and Africa*, New York, World Pub, 1970.

9 Lewis B. Namier, *1848: the Revolution of the Intellectuals*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1993 [1944].

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virtually all the non-European peoples. And the difficulties of these countries in adopting western political institutions and practices were correspondingly discovered as to a great extent inherent in their underlying adoption of the ethnic conception of the nation of German provenance.[10]

This tendency of considering the civic conception of the nation as confined to the westernmost part of the West, and the ethnic conception as universally spread over the rest of the world, has become a commonplace in the post-war decades. It acquired perhaps the most influential expression in a 1944 book by the American historian of Czech origin Hans Kohn,[11] but was accepted by many other scholars. Some of them went even further in emphasizing this West-East dichotomy. According to the British political scientist of Montenegrin origin John Plamenatz, the Germans – together with the Italians – followed in the XIXth century a pattern of nation-building that, however different from the Anglo-French one, nevertheless had recognizable western traits. For Plamenatz, the French-German fault-line on the map of nationalism had to be drawn further to the East: the actual full-blown embodiments of ethnic or linguistic nationalism were the Slavic and other East European peoples, which in their turn set the model for post-decolonization nationalism outside Europe.[12] The American sociologist of Russian origin Liah Greenfeld went the opposite way, relocating the same division line to a more western position. In her understanding, the ideological

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[10] Kedourie, ed., *Nationalism in Asia and Africa*. See also Robert Randle, "From National Self-determination to National Self-development", in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 31: 1, 1970, pp. 49-68.

[11] Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism. A Study in Its Origins and Background*, New York, Macmillan, 1961 [1944].

[12] John Plamenatz, "Two Types of Nationalism", in Eugene Kamenka, ed., *Nationalism: The Nature and Evolution of an Idea*, London, Edward Arnold, 1976, pp. 22-36.

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pattern based on invidious comparison and resentment and governing the gradual departure from the principles of civic nationhood – associated as they were with individualist values in the context of the pioneering English national community of the XVIth century – was elaborated in France, were civic nationhood came to be infused with collectivist overtones. The Germans and the Russians – together with most of the other people of the Earth – only radicalized that tendency, by adding the determinants of blood and soil to the same anti-individualist trend (the only pure embodiments of civic/individualist nationalism being Britain and the United States).[13]

The sharp opposition between western and eastern nationalism came to be challenged by scholars who argued – as the Polish philosopher and historian of ideas Andrej Walicki – that "it would not be too difficult for a critic of Kohn's theory to demonstrate that all the characteristics which he regards as specific to Central and Eastern European nationalism could also be found in Western Europe".[14] In the same way, early conceptions of nationhood in various East European contexts were discovered as patterned on the

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13 Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1992. For a summarizing statement see Idem, "Nationalism and Modermity", in *Social Research* 63: 1, 1996, pp. 3-40.

14 Andrej Walicki, *The Enlightenment and the Birth of Modern Nationhood. Polish Political Thought from Noble Republicanism to Tadeusz Kosciuszko*, Notre Dame, Ind., The University of Notre Dame Press, 1989, p. 5. See also Fredrika Bjőrklund, "The East European 'Ethnic Nation': Myth or Reality?", in *European Journal of Political Research* 45: 1, 2006, pp. 93-121. Also relevant is Maria Todorova, "The Trap of Backwardnedss: Modernity, Temporality and the Study of Eastern European Nationalism", in *Slavic Review* 64: 1, 2005, pp. 140-164, as well as various chapters from Iván Zoltán Dénes, ed., *Liberty and the Search for Identity. Liberal Nationalisms and the Legacy of Empires*, Budapest, Central European University Press, 2006.

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principles of republican political thought, and as such as having a civic or political content.[15] Whatever the future findings coming from this line of scientific inquiry, we must beware of conflating the theoretical distinction between civic and ethnic nationalism with a rigid West-East dichotomy.

3. The second distinction is closely connected to the previous one. The practice of employing the civic-ethnic dichotomy for differentiating between the political cultures of the world has gone hand in hand with the tendency of conceiving each national culture as heavily dominated, over the long run of historical time, by one of the two varieties of nationalist thinking. However, recent scholarship has discovered that the two conceptions succeeded each other recurrently, as dominating voices, in most national contexts. Cycles of cultural nationalism in the countries of civic tradition[16] and cycles of civic nationalism in countries of ethnic tradition[17] were accordingly disclosed.

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15 Walicki, *The Enlightenment and the Birth of Modern Nationhood*. See also Paschalis M. Kitromilides, "An Enlightenment Perspective on Balkan Cultural Pluralism: the Republican Vision of Rhigas Velestinlis", in *History of Political Thought* 24: 3, 2003, pp. 465-479.

16 For the recurrence of cycles of ethnic and civic nationalism within the same polity, see John Hutchinson, *The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism. The Gaelic Revival and the Creation of the Irish Nation State*, London, Allen & Unwin, 1987. See also Idem, *Modern Nationalism*, London, Fontana, 1995. For an approach to the American case from much the same perspective see Michael Billing, *Banal Nationalism*, London, Sage Publications, 1995. For East European historical evidence: Marina Germane, "Civic or Ethnic Nationalism? Two Competing Concepts in Interwar Latvia", in *Nations and Nationalism* 18: 3, 2012, pp. 439-430. A recent historical perspective underscoring the exclusionary dimension of early western national identities: Anthony Marx, *Faith in Nation: Exclusionary Origins of Nationalism*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003.

17 The French-German/civic-ethnic dichotomy has also been applied to explaining the difference between the *jus solis* and

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Some scholars went even further. They not only argued that the two varieties of nationalism can and do coexist with each other – succeeding each other as the most vocal discourses – in real political life, but they also maintained that the juxtaposition and interplay between them is a precondition for a sound liberal-democratic political life. According to this view, the civic-ethnic dualism within one and the same national context is predicated on the basic dualism between society and state. In the first nationalist discourse that can be characterized as thoroughly modern – that of the French Revolution, issuing from Abbé Sieyes' work *What is the Third Estate?* – the nation was conceived in a strict contractualist manner, as coextensive with the democratic polity, and the notions of "national" and "democratic" were employed as interchangeable. The "will of the nation" – "one and indivisible", and just another name for the Rousseauist "general will" – acted as the only valid source of political legitimacy. Political factions competed with each other, each of them trying to establish itself as the only legitimate interpreter of the nation's voice. But this revolutionary rhetoric tended to make all things social a matter of political concern, and society was threatened to be engulfed by the state. Society was devoid of any consistency of its own, being always threatened to be absorbed by the polity. The subsequent emergence of the discourse of cultural nationalism alongside the civic one has to be seen as conducive to the (re)discovery of society, which at that moment "slips out

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the *jus sanguinis* patterns of citizenship legislation: see Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1992. However, recent works have discovered that the principle of *jus sanguinis* became dominant in German legislation late in the XIXth century and in very specific historical circumstances: see Andreas K. Fahrmeier, "Nineteenth-century German Citizenships: a Reconsideration", in *The Historical Journal* 40: 3, 1997, pp. 721-752.

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from under the polity and acquires, beneath the surface of contractual forms, a properly societal 'substance'".[18]

4. The third – and perhaps the most important – of the distinctions is that between the nation imagined according to the civic model and the very body of citizenship. In most abstract terms, the civic-ethnic distinction can be reformulated as an opposition between "subjective" and "objective" criteria for defining the national group. In the first model, we can be said to belong to a nation only if we think about ourselves as belonging to it, that is, by virtue of an act of consent of our subjective will. There are no objective traits to stamp us as members of that nation, or to deny our access to another one. In the second model, an individual is part of the nation irrespective of his or her will, and by virtue of some objective characteristics, as blood, language or religion (when taken as an inherited trait and not as a matter of individual choice). Not possessing precisely those characteristics that are considered as defining for the nation in question can prevent the individual's acceptance to the membership of it, no matter his or her eagerness to obtain that acceptance. A terribly sharp expression of this view of national belonging is given by the traditionalist Romanian philosopher Nae Ionescu. Taking into discussion the claims of the Greco-Catholics to present themselves as Romanians, he concluded that, when departing from the Christian Orthodox faith, they lost contact with the true sources of Romanianess. Even an important Greco-Catholic intellectual like Samuil Micu, who offered works fundamental for strengthening the Romanians' sense of national identity – contributing

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[18] Singer, "Cultural versus Contractual Nations", p. 329. More historical evidence supporting the same argument in David A. Bell, "*Lingua Populi, Lingua Dei*: Language, Religion, and the French Revolutionary Nationalism", in *The American Historical Review* 100: 5, 1995, pp. 1403-1437.

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decisively to disclosing and establishing the idea of their Latin origins – cannot be considered a true member of the Romanian nation. He can be granted at most the honorific title of a "good Romanian", but not the bare status of a Romanian without qualifications.[19]

However, the practice of using concepts like "civic" or "political" for designating the nation defined by subjective criteria has led to the related one of conceiving it as one and the same thing with the state citizenry. It could be argued that this widespread confusion issued from the French tradition of thinking about nationhood and citizenship and from the no less common tendency of looking to political arrangements and cultural patterns elaborated in the French context as to models with universal relevance. In France, the sense of nationality was forged, across centuries, in the territorial matrix created by the medieval and early modern monarchy[20]. This long process of gradual elaboration was followed by a short and dramatically intense period of nation building during the revolutionary and Napoleonic age, when all regional peculiarities were melted into the democratic (and the populist-militarist) melting pot.[21] From Rousseau and Sieyes, through Renan, to

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19 Nae Ionescu, *Roza vânturilor 1926-1933*, ed. de Dan Zamfirescu, Bucureşti, Roza Vânturilor, 1990 [1937, ed. de Mircea Eliade], pp. 194-198.

20 Collete Beaune, *The Birth of an Ideology: Myths and Symbols of Nation in Late Medieval France*, ed. and transl. by Susan Ross Huston, Fredric L. Cheyette, Berkeley, The University of California Press, 1991; Peter Sahlins, "Fictions of a Catholic France: the Naturalization of Foreigners, 1685-1787", in *Representations* 47, 1994, Special Issue: "National Cultures before Nationalism", pp. 85-110.

21 Conor Cruise O'Brien, "Nationalism and the French Revolution", in Geoffrey Best, ed., *The Permanent Revolution. The French Revolution and Its Legacy*, 1789-1989, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1988, pp. 17-48: Singer, "Cultural versus Contractual Nations".

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contemporary authors like Louis Dumont,[22] Dominique Schnapper[23] and Pierre Manent,[24] a most influential trend of thought in France identified the quality of a French citizen with the fact of belonging to the French nation, while also offering this conception as valid for the entire mankind.

Because they have always had to be aware of the differences between Englishness and Britishness (as also, one might argue, because of the strong cultural imprint left by the experience of overseas colonization),[25] the British, by contrast, have grew accustomed to carefully observe the difference between nation and state, citizenship and nationality. The foundational texts of the British philosophical (and critical) reflection on the national issue – John Stuart Mill's *Considerations on Representative Government* of 1861[26] and Lord Acton's essay "Nationality"

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22 Louis Dumont, *German Ideology. From France to Germany and Back*, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1994. A critical commentary in Josep Llobera, "The French Ideology? Louis Dumont and the German Conception of the Nation", in *Nations and Nationalism* 2: 2, 1990, pp. 193-211.

23 Dominique Schnapper, *The Community of Citizens. On the Modern Idea of the Nation*, transl. by Séverine Rosée, New Brunswick, Transaction Publishers, 1998. For a summarizing statement see Idem, "Beyond the Opposition: Civic Nation versus Ethnic Nation", in *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, Supplementary Volume 22, 1998, pp. 219-234. A critical commentary in Josep Llobera, "The Concept of the Nation in French Social Theory: the Work of Dominique Schnapper", in *Nations and Nationalism* 4: 1, 1998, pp. 113-119.

24 Pierre Manent, "Democracy without Nations ?", in *Modern Liberty and Its Discontents*, ed. and transl. by Daniel J. Mahoney and Paul Senton, Lanham, Rowman & Littlefield, 1998, pp. 185-196.

25 Gerald Neumann, *The Rise of English Nationalism: a Cultural History, 1740-1830*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 1987; Richard Bourke, "Liberty, Authority and Trust in Burke's Idea of Empire", in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 61: 3, 2000, pp. 453-471.

26 John Stuart Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government* [1861], in *Utilitarianism, On Liberty, Considerations on*

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of the following year[27] – are built on the basic premise that national groups are not coincident, as a general rule, with state boundaries, and formulate the question of whether they have to be adjusted to each other. The fusion of citizenship and nationality – that in the French case is taken as a matter of fact – is seen here as a problem that can be given different solutions. Thus, Mill advocates the principle of national self-determination, arguing that there are strong reasons why nation and state should be made, as far as possible, conterminous.[28] By contrast, Acton argues the opposite case, condemning the principle of the national state as a form of utopian politics.[29] Later British scholarship in the field bears the imprint of those original theoretical inquiries.[30]

It emerges, thus, that the civic-ethnic dichotomy should be accompanied by a distinction between the "French" and the "British" conceptions regarding the relationship between citizenship and nationality. And we could even argue, further, that the latter view is better suited to the conditions of the non-western world (including Eastern Europe), where we can very hardly find state settings exhibiting such a near-overlapping between civic solidarity and national identity as obtained in the French context.

Representative Government, ed. by Geraint Williams, London, Dent, 1996, pp. 391-398

27 Lord Acton, "Nationality" [1862], în Gopal Balakrishnan, ed., *Mapping the Nation*, London, Verso, 1996, pp. 17-38. The article also gives a hint to the difference between the English and the French patterns of nation building, see esp. p. 29.

28 Georgios Varouxakis, *Mill on Nationality*, London, Routledge, 2002.

29 Timothy Lang, "Lord Acton and the Insanity of Nationality", in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 63: 1, 2002, pp. 129-149.

30 Ernest Barker, *National Character and the Factors in Its Formation*, New York, Harper, 1927; *Nationalism: a Report by a Study Group of Members of the Royal Institute of International Affairs*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1939; Hugh Seton-Watson, *Nations and States. An Inquiry into the Origins of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism*, London, Methuen, 1977.

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5. Fourth – and connected to the third point made above – , there is the problem of pondering the precise role that cultural determinants have to play in shaping the civic view of the nation. Again, terminological practice has led to recurrent confusions, as it is commonly taken for granted that the boundaries of the civic nation can and must be drawn without any reference whatsoever to the peculiar cultural traits of a national community. If the nation is coextensive with the body of citizens, it follows that the allegiance of the individuals to the latter can only be the same thing with their devotion to the laws and institutions of the polity. What holds the individuals together in a national society is their acceptance of a set of (continuously renegotiated) political values, and any intrusion of cultural elements into the definition of that social unit could become a step towards relapsing into particularism, collectivism and self-deceiving national mythology. If the nation is to be reconstructed on the contractualist model, it follows that the individuals deliberating the terms of the contractual agreement have to be conceived, in strict liberal terms, as defined solely by their abstract reason, without any reference to their cultural inheritance. The civic or political nation is a public affair. Culture has to be discarded from any connection with the public realm and relegated to the level of private life.

Some authors have tried to be consistent with this demand and to make it explicit, by advancing a theoretical model of political "patriotism" – devoid of any cultural determinants –, as against any kind of (irreducibly "cultural") nationalism. This is the path taken, for example, by the German philosopher Jűrgen Habermas[31] and the

[31] Jűrgen Habermas, "Citizenship and National Identity. Some Reflections on the Future of Europe", in Ronald Beiner, ed., *Theorizing Citizenship*, New York, The State University of New York Press, 1995, pp. 255-282.

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Italian political scientist Maurizio Viroli.[32] They both presented nationalism as a fallacy of modern political life, issuing from the deeply rooted mistake of dragging culture into the realm of politics. Things that should have always been kept separated from each other were thus connected by the modern idea of the nation-state. According to this one, a good polity has to be grounded on the foundation of a common culture, shared by all or most of the citizens. The allegiance to the common laws has to be strengthened by a devotion to the distinctive culture that encompasses the political association. However, once the realm of politics was thus vitiated by the illegitimate intrusion of cultural factors, the door was opened for all the horrors associated with integral nationalism that makes the entire political life dependent on the higher purpose of preserving and enhancing the spirit of the nation. Accordingly, our task today is to separate again culture from politics, to rule away the confused compound of nationalist politics and to recover the sense of civic patriotism which held together the ancient and early modern city-states.

Some other authors went the opposite way, proposing a model of nationhood that meets the requirements of the civic pattern while frankly displaying the dimension of cultural peculiarities. This is the path taken, for example, by the British political theorists David Miller and Margaret Canovan.[33] They have both argued that the strictly political patriotism of the kind offered by Habermas and Viroli is not a realistic solution: in modern political life, culture is deeply intertwined with politics and the state simply has to take

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32 Maurizio Viroli, *For Love of Country. An Essay on Patriotism and Nationalism*, Oxford, Claredon Press, 1995.

33 David Miller, *On Nationality*, Oxford, Claredon Press, 1995. Margaret Canovan, *Nationhood and Political Theory*, Cheltenham, Edward Elgar, 1996. More to the point: Idem, "Patriotism is Not Enough", in Catriona McKinnon, Iain Hampsher-Monk, eds., *The Demands of Citizenship*, New York, Continuum, 2000, pp. 276-297.

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account of this inescapable intermingling.[34] This should not be seen as an inherent danger to democracy. A sound conception of the nation has to accept that this one cannot be defined without any reference whatsoever to cultural markers. However, these cultural traits should be submitted themselves to the "daily plebiscite". They should be considered as themselves a matter of public debate and as dependent upon individual consent. Civic nationalism is itself a form of cultural nationalism, but with the contractual element added as an important ingredient.

6. Fifth, the civic-ethnic distinction has been associated with a certain long-standing attitude of the discipline of political philosophy towards the issue of national identity. This characteristic stance has consisted in conceiving nationalism – no matter how much sanitized on the basis of the civic model – as a necessary evil for liberal democracy, and not as an intrinsic component of it, having a positive function to perform. National sentiment or allegiance is to be seen, in this view, as a powerful force that has to be accommodated by the modern liberal state, but not as a constitutive element of it. Recent political theorists – branded as "liberal nationalists" – have challenged this academic orthodoxy, arguing that the long-term armistice between nationalism and liberalism has to be renegotiated, and transformed into a permanent peace. If rightly understood, national identity has to be conceived as an integral part of the normative foundations of liberal democracy. National allegiance is not a hinder to the functioning of the latter but a very precondition of it. The

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[34] For basically similar statements see Bernard Yack, "The Myth of the Civic Nation", Kai Nielsen, "Cultural Nationalism, Neither Ethnic Nor Civic" and Will Kymlicka, "Misunderstanding Nationalism", all in Ronald Beiner, ed., *Theorizing Nationalism*, New York, The State University of New York Press, 1999, pp. 103-118, resp. 119-130, 131-140.

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reordering of the intricate web of pre-modern forms of state into the modern system of nation states has gone hand in hand with the advances of liberalism and democracy:[35] it follows that the two processes have to be seen as closely related and complementary, rather than as inescapably conflicting with each other. There must have always been a certain fundamental affinity between nationality and modern democracy. Hence, we must disclose the links between the two and draw further on them for improving our political condition.[36]

The liberal nationalists have indicated four such significant connections. First, nationality is to be promoted from the standpoint of the liberal conception of the autonomous individual self. According to the standard liberal view, the individual social actor has to be conceived as unencumbered by any particular determinants, and nationality has correspondingly been treated suspiciously as implying a commitment to communal values that can only endanger the individual freedom of choice. Liberal nationalists argue that, contrary to this common view, national identity should actually be seen as constituting a precondition for rational choice. As one theorist of the kind said, "familiarity with a culture determines the boundaries of the imaginable".[37] The individual can learn to exercise his or her deliberative reason, and ability to make meaningful

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35 Anthony Giddens, *The Nation State and Violence*, Berkeley, The University of California Press, 1987; Michael Mann, ed., *The Rise and Decline of the Nation State*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1990; Michael Mann, "The Emergence of Modern European Nationalism", in John A. Hall, I. C. Jarvie, eds., *Transition to Modernity. Essays on Power, Wealth and Belief*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Pres, 1992, pp. 137-165.

36 In what follows, we mostly rely on Will Kymlicka, Christine Straehle, "Cosmopolitanism, Nations States and Minority Nationalism: a Critical Review of Recent Literature", in *European Journal of Philosophy* 7: 1, 1999, pp. 65-88.

37 Joseph Raz, quoted in Kymlicka, Straehle, "Cosmopolitanism", p. 71.

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choices, only in the milieu of an "encompassing culture". Even the choice to abandon the national context where he or she was born and raised and to adopt another one is possible only on the basis of the previous education of the individual deliberative reason within the cultural space of nationality. National cultures constitute "contexts of choice": hence, they should be helped to survive and to flourish, by employing political means if necessary, because they are conducive to the development of individual autonomy.[38]

Second, nationality deserves a good assessment when approached from the standpoint of procedural democracy. Democratic life is based on deliberation and trust. These ones are made possible, or in any case feasible, by virtue of the fact that people understand one another in the medium of a common language, and are familiar with one another as members of a single cultural community. As a pre-political form of solidarity, nationality acts as a kind of glue that keeps together the members of a citizenry. Again, it has to be protected, by using political means if necessary, in so far as it is conducive to enhancing democratic virtues.

Third, nationality has been discovered as valuable from the standpoint of welfare state policies. These ones require large-scale redistribution of resources between different layers of society and between different regions of the state. They require, thus, from some of the individuals to make sacrifices to the benefit of their fellow-citizens. But the readiness of some citizens to accept such sacrifices is enhanced if all the citizens share a common culture. For more than a century nationality has tended to be a symbol

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[38] This point is most forcefully made in Yael Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1993. See also Charles Taylor, "Cross-purposes: the Liberal-communitarian Debate", in Nancy L. Rosenblum, ed., *Liberalism and the Moral Life*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1989, pp. 159-182.

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of the political Right.[39] It has to be recovered now by the Left, and employed as a device for consolidating the policies of redistribution. Once again, the use of political means for the protection of nationality is acceptable, as long as the higher task in view is recognized as part of the liberal democratic agenda.[40]

Fourth, there is a most general reason for looking at nationality as a constitutive element of modern political life. Neither the foundational principles of liberalism nor those of democracy can offer sound criteria for spelling out on what grounds the boundaries of a state should be drawn. Modern political thought has never provided a satisfactory answer to the question of how to mark the legitimate limits for the territorial expansion of a political structure, precisely because it has generally been assumed – although it has seldom been stated clearly enough – that the answer was provided by the principle of the nation-state. This long-standing presupposition can now be made explicit – although in somewhat milder terms than in XIXth century *Risorgimento* thinking[41] –, and acknowledged as an integral part of liberal democratic theory. It can be accepted that nationality can offer one criterion – although definitely not the only one – for marking political boundaries legitimately. This criterion

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39 Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, sec. ed., Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004 [1992], pp. 101-130; Hagen Schulze, *States, Nations and Nationalism. From the Middle Ages to the Present*, transl. by William E. Yuill, London, Blackwell, 1996, pp. 231-302.

40 For this and the previous point see especially Miller, *On Nationality*. For a summarizing statement see Idem, "The Nation-state: a Modest Defense", in Chris Brown, ed., *Political Restructuring in Europe. Ethical Perspectives*, London, Routledge, 1994, pp. 137- 162. See also Brendan O'Leary, ed., "Symposium on David Miller's *On Nationality*", in *Nations and Nationalism* 2: 3, 1996, pp. 407-451.

41 David G. Rowley, "Giuseppe Mazzini and the Democratic Logic of Nationalism", in *Nations and Nationalism* 18: 1, 2012, pp. 39-56.

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should be taken as valid as long as it does not conflict with other political values.[42]

When speaking of nation or nationality, all these liberal nationalist arguments take for granted the civic model of nationhood. However, the authors embracing this position also tend to subscribe to the point made beforehand, namely to the idea that cultural markers cannot be expelled altogether from the civic definition of the nation. Furthermore, while the standard discourse on civic nationalism rests on presenting it as the second-best alternative to no nationalism at all, the liberal nationalists present it as a political idea valuable in its own.[43]

7. Sixth, making the previous point is conducive to tackling the issue of collective rights and multiculturalism. Some of the supporters of the liberal nationalist stance have maintained that, if consistently developed – and applied to specific contexts – , it issues into a "liberal multiculturalist" conception, which involves the demand for collective rights granted to minority cultural groups within a state. They also argue that such a policy would not only be compatible with the basic principles of liberalism but can actually be inferred from the very philosophical premises of the latter. The liberal state traditionally claims to rest on the bare idea of individual rights, and collective rights are accordingly rejected as derived from non-liberal principles. As liberalism

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42 Brian Barry, "Self-government Revisited", in *Democracy and Power. Essays in Political Theory I*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1991, pp. 156-186.

43 For several criticisms of the liberal nationalist position see Daniel M. Weinstock, "Is there a Moral Case for Nationalism?' in *Journal of Applied Philosophy* 13: 1, 1996, pp. 87-100; Andrew Vincent, "Liberal Nationalism: an Irresponsible Compound?", in *Political Studies* 45: 2, 1997, pp. 275-295; Bhikhu Parekh, "The Incoherence of Nationalism", in Ronald Beiner, ed., *Theorizing Nationalism*, New York, The State University of New York Press, 1999, pp. 295-325.

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emerged in opposition to pre-modern privileges enjoyed on a corporative basis, granting collective rights to national minorities would imply relapsing into pre-liberal practices. In actual fact, however – argues the Canadian political theorist Will Kymlicka[44] –, as long as the state encompasses more nationalities, it is in practice led to grant virtual collective rights to a segment of the citizenship, namely the majority national group. By the simple fact that the language with the greatest number of speakers is adopted as the official language of the state, its members enjoy unacknowledged privileges over their fellow-citizens that belong to minority groups. Liberals have traditionally claimed that a liberal state is neutral with respect to the national allegiance of the individual citizens, in the same way as it manages to be neutral with respect to their religious faiths: as religion, minority nationalism should be treated as a matter of private life, and the state should refrain from adopting explicit regulations with respect to it. However, nationality cannot be separated from politics in the same way as religion. Due to functional reasons – clearly spelled out by the historical and sociological approaches to the connection between modernization and nation building[45] –, modern political life is bound to acquire a national dimension, contrary to the legitimating self-image of liberal democratic regimes. Members of the majority are unavoidably favored by comparison to those of the national

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[44] Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship. A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*, Oxford, Claredon Press, 1995. A forceful criticism: Brian Barry, *Culture and Equality An Egalitarian Critique of Multiculturalism*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001. See also Michael Murphy, *Multiculturalism: a Critical Introduction*, London, Routledge, 2012, pp.62-95.

[45] Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1990 [1983]; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, sec. ed., London, Verso, 1991; John Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State*, sec. ed., Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1993.

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minorities by the very fact that their language is the official language and their particular culture is erected to a dominating position within the state. Hence, the liberal commitment to equal treatment of the individuals is not respected. In order to rule out this asymmetric treatment of the citizens and to make liberal states true to their philosophical commitments, the privileges enjoyed by the majorities have to be balanced with the help of specific collective rights granted to national minorities.

One further implication of this stance is that the body of citizenship – the traditional focus, as shown above, of the civic conception of the nation – could be reconstructed on stronger foundations once its fragmentation along cultural dividing lines has been acknowledged and given constitutional recognition.[46] Liberal multiculturalists also argue that policies based on the standard conception of the civic nation are led to take (illiberal) nationalist forms while continuing to invoke impeccable liberal credentials.[47] For sure, no further pleading for implementing melting pot policies in the emerging democracies of Eastern Europe can avoid offering a response to this argument.[48]

8. Let us summarize. Some ideas are usually taken for granted when employing – or just invoking – the civic-ethnic distinction in political parlance and even in academic discourse. It is too often taken as a matter of fact that the ethnic model is a defining characteristic of the non-western world, being virtually absent in the West. It is generally

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46 Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship*, pp. 173-192.

47 Idem, *Multicultural Odysseys. Navigating the New International Politics of Diversity*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007.

48 Idem, "Western Political Theory and Ethnic Relations in Eastern Europe", in Will Kymlicka, Magda Opalski, eds., *Can Liberal Pluralism be Exported? Western Political Theory and Ethnic Relations in Eastern Europe*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2001, pp. 13-106.

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considered that each national society is overwhelmingly dominated by one of the two types of national discourse, and thus they do not usually coexist, evenly balanced, within one and the same society. Most of those who subscribe to the civic-ethnic dichotomy think that, if properly interpreted, the civic nation can only be coextensive with the entire body of citizenship. As also that it can only be conceived as being forged exclusively with political building blocks, and as such that any intrusion of cultural determinants into its definition amounts to its distortion. Most often it is deemed that, no matter how useful it is for circumscribing the politically benign varieties of nationalism and distinguishing them from the harmful manifestations of ethnic politics, the civic model is to be seen as only the second-best alternative to no nationalism at all. Finally, most of the champions of the civic nation idea consider that it is able to offer a long-lasting resolution to the demands of national minorities, on the basis of individual rights and a universal conception of citizenship, and there is no need, as such, for collective rights and positive discriminatory policies in order to attain the goals of a right approach to the dilemmas of multicultural citizenship.

We argued that all these statements might not necessarily go like that. It may happen – and it is a problem to be discussed – that both varieties of nationalist discourse can and did frequently feature in western, as well as in eastern societies. It is most probable – and it is a question to be examined – that they can and do frequently coexist within the same polities, succeeding each other as dominating ideological voices and as major factors influencing the unfolding of underlying political cultures. It is reasonable to argue that, in most cases, it is impossible to make the body of citizenship conterminous with the national group, while it is still possible to persuade the national group to embrace a “civic” – that is, a “subjective” or “inclusionary” – conception of the nation. It is unreasonable to maintain that adopting

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such an inclusionary view of the nation requires dropping out all cultural determinants from its definition. It is a topic of debate whether the civic nation is a contingent element of liberal democracy or it is a constitutive component of its normative foundations. And it has to be discussed whether collective rights are not required, in many cases, as a constitutional device appropriate for tackling the compounded problems of multiculturalism.

We started by suggesting that the distinctions we make are useful for dispelling some of the confusions arising recurrently in the debates about citizenship, minorities and national conflicts in post-communist Eastern Europe. It is in order, therefore, to spell out in some detail the practical implications of the theoretical statements made above.

One might be puzzled especially by the first, second and fifth points. The first two of them look very much like some "soft" – and for that matter somewhat perverse – expressions of ideas coming dangerously close to an indigenist or anti-western stance. It might seem that they might offer an ideological support for questioning advocacies and policies meant to uproot those characteristics of East European political culture that have traditionally hindered the entrenchment of liberal democracy in the region, thus opposing designs for reform and defending the nationalist *status quo*. The last one looks like an even more dangerous attempt to "rehabilitate" the nation state, in a region where no sustained attempt to put it into question has ever taken place.[49]

Contrary to such possible fears, it is not the intention of the present paper either to disregard those entrenched features of non-western political cultures that have manifested themselves over time as hostile to democratization, or to prevent a critical inquiry of the nation state model. The goal is to argue that, in order to act as effective forces, ideas have

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[49] John Dunn, ed., *Contemporary Crisis of the Nation State?*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995.

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to sound convincing, after having been examined from all relevant standpoints. In the light of recent historical research, the distinction between the civic and the ethnic conceptions of the nation has come to sound unconvincing, as long as it is predicated on a rigid West-East dichotomy, and on a sharp separation between civic-minded and ethnic-minded political cultures. In the same way, we incline to give some credit to the liberal nationalist pleading for taking the idea of the nation seriously, accepting that it has some relevance for political philosophy.

The third, fourth and sixth of the preceding distinctions emerge, however, as still more significant for taking a right view on the predicament of the national question in Eastern Europe. Too often, this last one has been depicted as determined, over the long run of history, by the virtually unchallenged ascendancy of the ethnic vision over its rival in all the countries of the region. In fact, a combination between the predominance of ethnic nationalism at the grass-roots level of local societies and repeated misconceived attempts to impose from the top policies of homogenization nourished and sustained by the idea of the civic nation might be a more accurate description of the actual course that the process of nation building has followed here. In a place with shifting political borders, where national identities could not be forged, as in the West, within the resilient frameworks of strong dynastic states,[50] political regimes competing for westernizer credentials repeatedly attempted to pattern the emerging national states on the melting pot model inspired primarily by the French example,

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50 Peter F. Sugar, Ivo J. Lederer, eds., *Nationalism in Eastern Europe*, Seattle, The University of Washington Press, 1969; Paschalis M. Kitromilides, "'Imagined Communities' and the Origins of the National Question in the Balkans", in *Enlightenment, Nationalism, Orthodoxy. Studies in the Culture and Political Thought of Southeastern Europe*, Aldershot, Variorum, 1994, pp. 149-192.

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also trying to infuse the citizenries with a sense of belonging to "political nations" and to relegate mere "ethnic identities" to the sphere of private life. For sure, liberal-minded intellectuals have often criticized local governments for not being willing to put into practice whole-heartedly the principles of the civic nation. Such criticisms, however, could only support the standard governmental stance of hailing minorities as "tribalist" defenders of ethnic nationalism each time they voiced demands about corporative recognition and collective rights. Such accusations have occurred, as a matter of fact, each time minorities claimed to be considered as parts of neighboring state-nations, instead of complying to present themselves as "ethnic groups" within their own states. Before 1918, "ethnic" Romanians in Dualistic Hungary were thus expected to conceive of themselves as members of the Hungarian "political nation". After 1918, "ethnic" Hungarians have been expected in the same way to merge into the Romanian "political nation". The same expectations have been voiced all throughout the region, whether with respect to the Turks of Bulgaria, to the Hungarians of Slovakia or to the Russian inhabitants of the Baltic countries.

It seems only reasonable to admit that, in Eastern Europe, nations forged as cultural-linguistic entities and spread across (always fluid) political borders came to intermingle with each other as fully formed collective identities,[51] not content of defining themselves as mere ethnic groups when having the status of minorities. National identities were not cemented over centuries within firmly established boundaries. As boundaries were frequently modified by territorial settlements, it often happened that

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51 Miroslav Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe*, transl. by Ben Fowkes, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1985; Idem, "From National Revival to the Fully Formed Nation: the Nation Building Process in Europe", in Gopal Balakrishnan, ed., *Mapping the Nation*, London, Verso, 1996, pp. 78-97.

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segments of previously dominant nations found themselves overnight living as minority groups.[52] The French (political) identity of the Alsacians was created over a long period of time. With a hindsight, it emerges that one could have only unreasonably expected the Turkish inhabitants of Bulgaria after 1878 to define their links to the Bulgarian state on the Alsacian pattern. After the settlement of 1867, it was already too late for the Hungarian state to repeat at an accelerated pace the French experiment of nation building and to be successful in persuading the Romanians to consider themselves as just an ethnic group, part of the Hungarian nation defined in civic terms.[53] After 1918, and again after 1989, it has not been a realistic expectation from the part of the Romanian state that the Hungarians would start to think of themselves as nothing more than a part of the Romanian political nation. We have to accept that, in Eastern Europe, a national group can inhabit several states, and a citizenry can be composed of representatives of various nations. It is a matter of words, but words can make a great difference. This is not to deny the relevance of the civic-ethnic distinction, or to rehabilitate ethnic nationalism. It is only to admit that, in order to be effective, ideas have to be adapted to circumstances.

In order to act effectively in Eastern Europe, the idea of the civic nation has to be interpreted not as a demand to

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52 Peter F. Sugar, ed., *Ethnic Diversity and Conflict in Eastern Europe*, Santa Barbara, ABC-Clio, 1980; Raymond Pearson, *National Minorities in Eastern Europe*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 1983.

53 For a somewhat too enthusiastic description of pre-1918 Hungary as a melting pot society see Karen Barkey, "Negotiated Paths to Nationhood: a Comparison of Hungary and Romania in the Early Twentieth Century", in *East European Politics and Societies* 14: 3, 2000, pp. 497-531. For a critique of contemporary melting pot policies also applicable to past experiments of the kind see Janos Kis, "Beyond the Nation State", in *Social Research* 63: 1, 1995, pp. 191-215.

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experiment the model of the "melting-pot", but as a struggle on two fronts. On the one hand, people have to be persuaded to think about their national groups as inclusionary and defined in "subjective" terms. On the other hand, governments have to be persuaded to accept that, in the region, states can and do often comprise several nations, and that some of these nations have links with neighboring states. To put it in other words, as a general rule a state in the region cannot be conterminous with a civic nation, but only with an aggregate of "civic nations" (or fragments of them). A realistic agenda for accommodating cultural diversity can only be drawn on the basis of disseminating a clear consciousness of these realities at all levels of the public discourse.[54]

[54] Michael Johns, "'Do As I Say, Not As I Do': the European Union, Eastern Europe and Minority Rights", in *East European Politics and Societies* 17: 4, 2003, pp. 682-699.

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Part II

MODERNIZATION AND SOCIOLOGIES OF THE ELITES

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4. A Divide over the Oligarchy: Competing Uses of Marxism in Pre-communist Romania

The theoretical controversies accompanying the split between social-democracy and communism in interwar Romania revolved around an issue that marked them off from ideological debates of the same sort taking place elsewhere in Europe at the time. According to the communists, social-democratic reluctance in truly embracing the interests of the working class had been rationalized with the help of an intellectual construction that unnecessarily revised Marxist sociological categories. Socialists maintained that

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one key difference between the Romanian social landscape and that of the developed capitalist-industrial West was the conflicting relationship between two wings of the dominant class. The first was nothing else but the capitalist bourgeoisie, which standard Marxist wisdom indicated as the archenemy of proletarian emancipation. In the Romanian setting, however, this social group was to be treated by the Left as a progressive force and a temporary ally against the nebulous social entity of a non-capitalist – and yet non-feudal – "oligarchy", that was to be struggled against first. Tracing the origins and content of that notion enables us to disclose the surprising ways in which Marxism had been fused, in the preceding decades, with various strands of the surrounding cultural space and to make a brief analytical inventory of the main ideological uses of Marxism in pre-communist Romania. Also, tracing the posterity of the communists' depiction of the notion of "oligarchy" as a theoretical heresy – and not as a meaningful intellectual tool required for making sense of Romanian social peculiarities – reveals the larger cultural consequences of what could otherwise be considered as a minor ideological squabble of the late 1930's.

1. The departure of the Komintern branch of Marxism from the fold of social-democracy took place, in Romania, in 1921, following soon after the foundation of the Third International in 1919.[1] Outlawed in 1924, the Communist Party was to reemerge as a legal political organization only after August 23, 1944. By the time it went into underground activities, left-wing political mobilization, quite significant in the immediate aftermath of the First World War, had already decreased in intensity.[2] The most important consequence of

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1 George Lichtheim, "Social-democracy and Communism, 1918-1968", in *Studies in Comparative Communism* 3: 1, 1970, pp. 5-30.

2 Lucien Karchmar, "Communism in Romania, 1918-1921", in Ivo Banac, ed., *The Effects of World War I. The Class War after the Great War:*

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that surge of activism, raised by the revolutionary tide which had seemed, for a short while, to engulf Central Europe and fulfill the Leninist-Trotskyist design of an international communist upheaval, was the emergence of radical Right, partly as a reaction to the threat of Bolshevik contamination.[3] An important stream of political contestation against the establishment was to be cast, during the interwar years, in the guise of fascism.[4] As to the establishment itself, its two main components were the National Liberal Party – with distant historical origins, emerging consolidated from the war, enjoying uninterrupted tenures in power in 1922-1926 and 1933-1937 and dedicated to modernization from above by the means of interventionist economic policies – and the political forces grouped, after 1930, around king Carol II, who gave a further twist to the well-entrenched Romanian authoritarian liberalism, borrowing heavily from corporatism while at the same time keeping a hostile eye on the growing and noisy fascist revolution of the Iron Guard.[5] The only embodiment of the Left which became

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the Rise of Communist Parties in East Central Europe 1918-1921, Boulder, Colo., East European Monographs, 1983, pp. 127-187.

3 Francis L. Carsten, *The Rise of Fascism*, Berkeley, The University of California Press, 1967; Irina Livezeanu, "Fascists and Conservatives in Romania: Two Generations of Nationalists", in Martin Blinkhorn, ed., *Fascists and Conservatives*, London, Unwin Hyman, 1990, pp. 218-239.

4 Eugen Weber, "The Men of the Archangel", in *Journal of Contemporary History* 1: 1, 1966, pp. 101-126; Armin Heinen, *Legiunea "Arhanghelul Mihail". Mişcare socială şi organizație politică*, trad. de Cornelia şi Delia Eşianu, Bucureşti, Humanitas, 1999.

5 Andrew C. Janos, "The One-party State and Social Mobilization: East Europe between the Wars", in Samuel P. Huntington, Clement H. Moore, eds., *Authoritarian Politics in Modern Society: the Dynamics of Established One-Party Systems*, New York, Basic Books, Inc., 1970, pp. 204-236; Idem, "Modernization and Decay in Historical Perspective: the Case of Romania", in Kenneth Jowitt, ed., *Social Change in Romania, 1860-1940. A Debate on Development in a European Nation*, Berkeley,

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politically effective was the National-Peasant Party, in power for most of the years 1928-1933.[6] Neither clandestine communism nor legal social-democracy were able, all throughout those years, to raise a powerful popular support.[7] Most often, this fact is taken to imply that studying pre-communist Romanian Marxism can only have a limited relevance for gaining a broader understanding of pre-communist Romania.[8] The present article does not subscribe to such a view.[9]

No social and political theory of communism gained currency, in Romania, over the interwar period. Accordingly,

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University of California, Institute of International Studies, 1978, pp. 72-116; Paul A. Shapiro, "Romania's Past as Challenge for the Future: a Developmental Approach to Interwar Politics", in Daniel N. Nelson, ed., *Romania in the 1980's*, Boulder, Westview Press, 1981, pp. 17-67.

6 Henry L. Roberts, *Rumania. Political Problems of an Agrarian State*, Hamden, Conn., Archon Books, 1969 [1951], pp. 130-169; Z. Ornea, *Țărănismul. Studiu sociologic*, Bucureşti, Ed. Politică, 1969.

7 Roberts, *Rumania*, pp. 243-258.

8 Ghiță Ionescu, *Communism in Romania, 1944-1962*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1964; Vladimir Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons: a Political History of Romanian Communism*, Berkeley, The University of California Press, 2003; Stelian Tănase, *Clienții lu' Tanti Varvara. Istorii clandestine*, Bucureşti, Humanitas, 2005.

9 The present paper largely summarizes the arguments developed in Victor Rizescu, "Populismul şi celelalte marxisme româneşti", in Constantin Stere, *Scrieri politice şi filozofice*, ed. de Victor Rizescu, Bucureşti, Dominor, 2005, pp. 5-57 and Idem, "Marxism şi oligarhie", in *Tranziții discursive. Despre agende culturale, istorie intelectuală şi onorabilitate ideologică după comunism*, Bucureşti, Corint, 2012, pp. 47-73. Broad perspectives on Marxist social thought in Romania can be found in Roberts, *Rumania*; Joseph Love, *Crafting the Third World. Theorizing Underdevelopment in Rumania and Brasil*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1996; Henri H. Stahl, *Gânditori şi curente de istorie socială românească*, ed. de Paul H. Stahl, Bucureşti, Ed. Universității din Bucureşti, 2001.

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the theoretical clarification of the disagreements between social-democracy and communism had to wait until 1944-1945, when the theorist Lucreţiu Pătrăşcanu delineated, in a series of works partly elaborated in the previous years, the ideological worldview of international communism as it related to Romanian realities. As to his party's relationship with the local socialists at the level of doctrine, the ideological statement of Pătrăşcanu made it to cling on a highly nebulous idea which does not immediately disclose its connections with the urgencies of practical politics: for the communist, the edge stone of theoretical divergence between the two Romanian branches of Marxism was constituted by their different stances taken to the notion of a local ruling "oligarchy". Socialists maintained that, in order to act in accordance with the long-term Marxist revolutionary designs, local political forces that defended the interests of the working class had to take a temporary alliance with the entrepreneurial bourgeoisie against a social class which, for the time being, controlled the levers of Romanian politics and exercised a powerful domination over the whole society: described as the "oligarchy", this non-capitalistic class was even less of a surviving landholding ruling stratum. In fact, any attempt to describe it in terms of standard Marxist sociological categories was doomed to a failure, as it was part of a social reality that had not been envisaged by Marx when elaborating his theory of historical evolution. This social reality, of which the "oligarchy" was a central tenet, had to be explained, no doubt, in Marxist terms, but such an accomplishment required a flexible and innovative use of Marxist sociology. For Pătrăşcanu, such claims could only hide the intention of social-democrats to collaborate with a part of the ruling exploiter class and to indefinitely postpone, as such, the proletarian revolution.[10]

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[10] Lucreţiu Pătrăşcanu, *Problemele de bază ale României*, Bucureşti, Socec & Co, 1944, pp. 257-258.

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The idea incriminated by Pătrăşcanu as a theoretical heresy had not appeared as an innovation of the interwar period, being firmly rooted, instead, in the long-term evolution of Marxist theorizing in the Romanian context. Far from being formulated as a response to a particular constellation of challenges coming from the recent past, it stood as the very cornerstone of the political identity of Romanian social-democracy. Before marking the dividing line stretching through the interwar Left, it was shaped in the context of another debate between two different interpretations of Marxism, taking place before the First World War. Moreover, at that time, the school of thought dubbed by Pătrăşcanu as a traitor of Marxist orthodoxy stood as the very guardian of the same orthodoxy. From the 1880's to the 1910's, Romanian socialism had to argue its right to exist and activate on the local soil not only against the mainstream political tendencies of liberalism, conservatism and traditionalist nationalism, but also facing the populist argument related to the inutility of promoting proletarian emancipation in the setting of agrarian backwardness.[11] The last challenge was the more powerful as it was expressed itself in the language of the Left, claiming to offer a correct interpretation of Marxism in relation to the Romanian predicament.[12]

2. As in Russia and the other countries of East Central Europe, agrarian populism developed in Romania through a constant dialogue with European and local Marxism and eventually saw itself as an authorized translation of the

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11 Michael Kitch, "Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea and Rumanian Marxism", in *The Slavonic and East European Review* 55: 1, 1977, pp. 65-89; Z. Ornea, *Opera lui C. Dobrogeanu-Gherea*, Bucureşti, Cartea Românească, 1983.

12 Z. Ornea, *Poporanismul*, Bucureşti, Minerva, 1972; Michael Kitch, "Constantin Stere and Rumanian Populism", in *The Slavonic and East European Review* 53: 131, 1975, pp. 248-271.

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same ideological tradition as to make it resonate with the real economic, social and political urgencies which confronted the underdeveloped periphery of Europe.[13] Rejecting the all-encompassing Marxist philosophy of history and strict determinism tightened within the positivist-based orthodoxy of the age,[14] the populists saw Marx as a sociologist of capitalist society, whose close reading offered strong arguments precisely to the extent that his predictions about the evolution of all societies through the same stages of evolution – from the primitive, ancient and feudal, through the capitalist, to the socialist – could not be sustained. Having no access to external markets that had been captured by the dynamic economies of the West and being confined to internal markets composed overwhelmingly of poor peasant consumers, industrial capitalism could not take hold in the countries of the East by the means of the free play of economic mechanisms. If promoted through the instruments of state intervention, it could only expand peasant misery, as the mass of the population had to bear the fiscal burdens of protectionist policies. Relying on a philosophic voluntarism which made heavy use of late XIXth century neo-Kantianism,[15] most of the East European

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13 David Mitrany, *Marx against the Peasant. A Study in Social Dogmatism*, New York, Collier Books, 1961 [1951]; Andrzej Walicki, *The Controversy over Capitalism. Studies in the Social Philosophy of the Russian Populists*, Notre Dame, Ind., The University of Notre Dame Press, 1989 [1969].

14 Georges Haupt, *Aspects of International Socialism, 1871-1914*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1986; Dick Geary, "The Second International: Socialism and Social Democracy", in Terence Ball, Richard Bellamy, eds., *The Cambridge History of Twentieth-century Political Thought*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003, pp. 219-238.

15 Walicki, *The Controversy over Capitalism*, pp. 29-131; H. Stuart Hughes, *Consciousness and Society: the Reorientation of European Social Thought, 1890-1930*, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1958, pp. 183-191; Melissa Lane, "Positivism: Reactions and

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populists drew, from this analysis of the facts, the conclusion that government-sponsored industrialization had to be stopped in order for their societies to be able to move from the traditional agrarian world to the stage of socialism, by skipping the intermediate stage of capitalism.

In the case of the Russian and several other national varieties of populism, such a confidence in the virtues of agrarian backwardness – which was deemed to offer a shortcut to socialism by avoiding the horrors of capitalism – drew insights from local ideological traditions cast in the mold of traditionalist nationalism. The Slavic communal village of the *obshchina* – considered by various Slavophiles of the region as a repository of the values and ways of life characteristic to the indigenous organic community, as against the western-induced individualistic society[16] – was seen by the populists as a privileged springboard to the world of socialism. That is, dissociating the idea of the *obshchina* from the regressive utopia of traditionalism, they associated it with the image of a new era of social harmony placed in the future. For some time, and especially in Russia, populism adopted the mood of revolutionary terrorism. After the debacle of the "Go to the People" movement in 1875 and the assassination of tsar Alexander II in 1881,[17] it evolved, however, towards a reformist stance

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Developments", in Terence Ball, Richard Bellamy, eds., *The Cambridge History of Twentieth-century Political Thought*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003, pp. 321-342.

16 Gavin Kitching, *Development and Underdevelopment in Historical Perspective. Populism, Nationalism and Industrialization*, sec. ed., London, Routledge, 1989, pp. 145-153; Andrzej Walicki, *The Slavophile Controversy: History of a Conservative Utopia in Nineteenth-century Russian Thought*, transl. by Hilda Andrews-Rusiecka, Notre Dame, Ind., University of Notre Dame Press, 1989 [1975].

17 Franco Venturi, *Roots of Revolution: a History of the Populist and Socialist Movements in Nineteenth-century Russia*, transl. by

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best exhibited in the works of the social and economic analysts V. P. Vorontsov and N. Danielson, who employed Marxist economics in order to argue for a peaceful transition to a peasant-dominated socialism, by capitalizing on the socialist elements already present in the texture of Russian agrarian world.[18] In this new guise, Russian populism stood as the eastern counterpart of the western Marxist revisionism centered upon the figure of Eduard Bernstein, which argued, much in the same manner and also dissociating itself from deterministic thinking, that, as Marxist predictions about growing income disparities and greater strains put on the capitalist economy by periodic crises of overproduction were not being fulfilled, the industrial working classes of advanced societies had to satisfy their demands by the means of trade-union activism and parliamentary pressures.[19]

Romanian agrarian society after the reform of 1864 contained fewer elements of ancient peasant communalism than post-1861 Russia or post-Ottoman Serbia and Bulgaria.[20] This was one reason why the Romanian branch of Marxist agrarian populism – whose main spokesman was

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Francis Haskell, rev. ed., London, Phoenix Press, 2001 [1960], pp. 709-720.

18 Arthur P. Mendel, *Dilemmas of Progress in Tsarist Russia. Legal Marxism and Legal Populism*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1961; Walicki, *The Controversy over Capitalism*.

19 Peter Gay, *The Dilemma of Democratic Socialism: Eduard Bernstein's Challenge to Marx*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1952; George Lichtheim, *Marxism. An Historical and Critical Study*, sec. ed., New York, Praeger, 1965, pp. 278-300.

20 Jerome Blum, "The Rise of Serfdom in Eastern Europe", in *The American Historical Review* 62: 4, 1957, pp. 807-836; Daniel Chirot, *Social Change in a Peripheral Society: The Creation of a Balkan Colony*, New York, Academic Press, 1976. See also Maria Todorova, "Myth-making in European Family History: the *Zadruga* Revisited", in *East European Politics and Societies* 4: 1, 1990, pp. 30-76.

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the Bessarabian émigré Constantin Stere, settled in Romania in 1892 after an apprenticeship in the Russian *narodnik* movement and a detention in Siberia[21] – went even farther than either Bernstein or the Russian populists on the same path of revisionism. While formulating his own argument about the impossibility of industrial development in Romania on the pattern set by Vorontsov and Danielson and backing it with the authority of Marx and Marxist science, he completely abandoned the design of a socialist revolution, replacing it with that of an "agrarian democracy": a political arrangement enabling the overwhelming peasant majority to enjoy the rewards of its predominance in the economic process, after being liberated from the burdens of futile and misled attempts at industrial modernization and given a decisive say in public life.

In the same way as the economic and sociological theory of eastern populism stood as the counterpart of western Marxist revisionism, so the re-statements of Marxist orthodoxy against revisionist challenges followed a pattern widely spread across the political borders of the time. Best represented by the German Karl Kautsky and the Russian Gheorghi Plekhanov, this branch of late XIXth and early XXth century Marxist thinking set out to defend the deterministic conception of historical materialism, maintaining that all societies were bound to pass through the same developmental sequence of stages, culminating with the advent of socialism. The socialist revolution, issuing from the inherent contradictions of capitalism, was once again asserted as the inevitable consequence of historical laws, in the countries of advanced economic and social evolution as well as in those of retarded modernization.[22] In Russia and

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21 Z. Ornea, *Viața lui C. Stere*, Bucureşti, Cartea Românească, vols. 1-2, 1989, 1991.

22 Lichtheim, *Marxism*, pp. 259-277; Andrzej Walicki, *Marxism and the Leap to the Kingdom of Freedom. The Rise and Fall of the*

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Eastern Europe, however, this renewed belief in historical inevitability implied a further argument, related to the unavoidable replacement of the social and economic arrangements of agrarian traditionalism with those of industrial capitalism. While predicating the inescapable character of the socialist revolution, both Kautsky and Plekhanov emphasized their conviction that the event able to open the gates of socialism could only take place against the background of a fully developed capitalist social order, only after capitalism itself had passed through the full cycle of its inherent crises, and moreover only after the socialist movement had become able to mobilize in its favor a widespread popular support. Accordingly, rejecting the populist wisdom about the dispensable character of capitalism as an intermediate link between the agrarian society and socialism, and collecting proofs to the extent that capitalist economy had already penetrated Russian society to such a degree as to make a sham of any dream about preserving intact the institutions of village communalism, Plekhanov never wavered in his belief that, if accomplished prematurely, a Russian socialist revolution would lead to a renewed Oriental despotism. Half a century later, Karl Wittfogel was to rediscover and take over the same thread of thinking, which associated the analysis of ancient Middle East "hydraulic societies" with that of Soviet totalitarianism.[23]

As populist reformism, so Kautskyan-Plekhanovist Marxism had a Romanian embodiment. In fact, Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea, the founder of this ideological trend – born in Ukraine under the name of Salomon Katz, precociously immersed in revolutionary activities and taking refuge in

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Communist Utopia, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1995, pp. 208-227; Geary, "The Second International".

[23] Karl A. Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism: a Comparative Study of Total Power*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1957; Samuel H. Baron, *Plekhanov: the Father of Russian Marxism*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1963.

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Romania already in 1875, at the heyday of Russian populism[24] – evolved towards such a stance not under the influence of Plekhanov, but in an independent fashion. His first significant articles with such a bent – "Karl Marx and Our Economists"[25] and "What Do the Romanian Socialists Want?"[26] – appeared in 1884-1886, while in 1893, when Stere for the first time exposed the rudiments of a populist argument in the series of articles "From the Notes of a Hypochondric Spectator",[27] Gherea was already the intellectual animator of a socialist party with a Plekhanovist orientation, founded in the same year and affiliated to the Second International, itself functioning since 1889.[28] The Social Democratic Party of Romanian Workers exhibited from the very beginning the shortcomings of any political organization addressing the urban proletariat in an overwhelmingly agrarian country. A large part of its constituency – including Stere, a fellow–traveler that had never concealed his dissident views – left it in 1899 for the liberal camp, intent on pushing the most progressive ruling party on the path of social reform.[29] Up to 1910, when a Social Democratic Party was reconstituted, the socialists

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24 Z. Ornea, *Viața lui C. Dobrogeanu-Gherea*, Bucureşti, Compania, 2006 [1982].

25 Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea, "Karl Marx şi economiştii noştri" [1884], in *Opere complete*, ed. de Ion Popescu-Puțuri et al., Bucureşti, Ed. Politică, vol. 1, 1976, pp. 40-164.

26 Idem, "Ce vor socialiştii români? Expunerea socialismului ştiințific şi programul socialist" [1886], in *Opere complete*, ed. de Ion Popescu-Puțuri et al., Bucureşti, Ed. Politică, vol. 2, 1976, pp. 7-126.

27 C. Stere, "Din notițele unui observator ipocondric (un foileton social)" [1893], in *Scrieri politice şi filozofice*, ed. de Victor Rizescu, Bucureşti, Dominor, 2005, pp. 129-167.

28 Constantin-Titel Petrescu, *Socialismul în România*, Bucureşti, Ed. Fundației Social-Democrate "Constantin-Titel Petrescu", 2003 [1944]; Z. Ornea, *Curentul cultural de la* Contemporanul, Bucureşti, Minerva, 1977.

29 Ornea, *Viața lui C. Stere*, vol. 1, pp. 236-275.

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Gherea and Christian Rakovski – an international revolutionary born in Bulgaria, who was to join the leadership of the Bolshevik Revolution after 1917[30] – and the populists Stere and Garabet Ibrăileanu went on with their polemical exchanges, which reached a climax in the immediate aftermath of the great peasant revolt of 1907. Stere's series of articles "Social-democracy or populism?" of 1907-1908[31] led Gherea to elaborate and expose at great length the tenets of his doctrine. As contained primarily in the two articles "A short response to a short review"[32] and "Post-script or forgotten words"[33] of 1908, in the comprehensive book *Neoserfdom* of 1910[34] and in the text of 1911 entitled "On Socialism in Backward Countries", published as an after-word to a translation of Kautsky's *The Foundations of Social-democracy*,[35] this doctrine made clear that, waiting for the spark of revolution to come from the developed West, Romanian socialists were confined, for the time being, to the paradoxical role of working for the development and maturation of local capitalism. As the populist Marxism of Stere, convinced of the impossibility of propelling Romania on the path of capitalism, dropped out

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30 Francis Conte, *Christian Rakovski, 1873-1941: a Political Biography*, transl. by A. P. M. Bradley, Boulder, Colo., East European Monographs, 1989.

31 C. Stere, "Social-democratism sau poporanism?", in *Scrieri politice şi filozofice*, ed. de Victor Rizescu, Bucureşti, Dominor, 2005, pp. 169-353.

32 Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea, "Un mic răspuns la o mică recenzie" [1908], in *Opere complete*, ed. de Ion Popescu-Puțuri et al., Bucureşti, Ed. Politică, vol. 3, 1977, pp. 454-466.

33 Idem, "Post-scriptum sau cuvinte uitate" [1908], in *Opere complete*, ed. de Ion Popescu-Puțuri et al., Bucureşti, Ed. Politică, vol. 3, 1977, pp. 476-504.

34 Idem, "Neioiobăgia" [1910], in *Opere complete*, ed. de Ion Popescu-Puțuri et al., Bucureşti, Ed. Politică, vol. 4, 1977.

35 Idem, "Asupra socialismului în țările înapoiate" [1911], in *Opere complete*, ed. de Ion Popescu-Puțuri et al., Bucureşti, Ed. Politică, vol. 5, 1978, pp. 43-75.

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the idea of a socialist revolution in order to adopt that of the "peasant democracy", so the socialist Marxism of Gherea, taking account of the low level reached by capitalism development in Romania, put into brackets the revolutionary design for an indefinite time, concentrating instead on the urgent task of capitalist modernization.[36]

3. Actually, what both Stere and Gherea reproached to local capitalism was not its mere feebleness, but its non-authentic character. It was at this point that the two thinkers of the Left and their associates joined a stream of social criticism with a long pedigree, originated in the 1860's within the ideological camp of conservatism and later broadened by the school of traditionalist nationalism. Although an invention of the Right, the analysis of Romanian society in terms of the disjunction between the western-imported institutional and ideological "forms" and the local economic, social and cultural "substance" fit well with the Marxist approach to social reality in terms of the relationship between "base" and "superstructure". For this reason, the encounter between international Marxism and the Romanian currents of thought coming from the conservative Titu Maiorescu[37] and the nationalist Mihai Eminescu[38] led to reciprocal influences and eventually to their fusion into a "critical culture" underlying the whole ideological spectrum of the time. While local social criticism leveled against the shortcomings of imitative modernization emerged more sophisticated from this dialogue with the Marxist tradition, so the latter one was largely transformed, in the Romanian setting, into a sociology of modernization,

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[36] See also Cristian Rakovski, „Poporanism, socialism şi realitate" [1908], în *Scrieri social-politice*, ed. de Ion Iacoş, Bucureşti, Ed. Politică, 1977, pp. 140-184.

[37] Z. Ornea, *Junimea şi junimismul*, Bucureşti, Ed. Eminescu, 1975.

[38] Idem, *Sămănătorismul*, Bucureşti, Ed. Fundației Culturale Române, 1998 [1970].

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concerned more with the short-term prospects of indigenous capitalism than with the long-term chances of a socialist revolution.[39] As to the prevailing characteristics of local society, they were placed by Gherea under the general label of "neoserfdom", a peculiar combination of feudal and capitalist elements which brought together the faults of both systems with none of their benefits. As long as such social arrangements were in place, Gherea considered, capitalist development could not proceed farther. As the self-professed "bourgeois" elite of Romania – structured around the Liberal Party – was not interested in promoting genuine capitalist modernization, having a stake in maintaining the existing situation, it was the task of the socialist Left to militate for the cause of "authenticity" in the field of economic structures and social relationships.

It was at this juncture that the notion of "oligarchy" became a central pillar of Romanian socialism's ideology. Alongside the analysis of agrarian economy in terms of "neoserfdom", Gherea started to conceptualize the dynamics of elite formation in Romania in terms of the competing relationship between the declining landholding class and a rising social category defined not by its control over the means of production and its function in the economic process, but by its privileged connection to the state apparatus. Although not an economic interest group, and as such not a "class" according to the proper Marxist definition of this notion, the category of bureaucrats had acquired a consciousness of itself that made it to act as a virtual class in Romanian society. A product of the "political industry", it also managed to establish its control over the state-driven economic mechanisms which functioned to its sole benefit. Most often confused with a "bourgeoisie", due to the *tiers*

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[39] David Harrison, *The Sociology of Modernization and Development*, London, Routledge, 1988; Charles K. Wilber, Kenneth P. Jameson, eds., *The Political Economy of Development and Underdevelopment*, fifth. ed., New York, McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1994.

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état origins of its rank and file and even of its leaders, it was the perfect opposite of a genuine entrepreneurial middle class, its very existence acting – like that of the neo-feudal agrarian relationships – such as to impede the further evolution of capitalism. As long as both the remnants of feudalism and the all-powerful oligarchy were not demolished, Romania's advancement towards socialism through the entering gate of a genuine capitalism was prevented, and local society was evolving on another path of development than western societies, on the course of which there appeared phenomena with no counterpart in the record of western history.

Anticipated in a sub-chapter of *Neoserfdom,*[40] Gherea's theory of the "oligarchy" was intended by him to stay at the centre of another book, meant to broaden the analysis of Romanian agrarian peculiarities into an overall characterization of the country's social structure. The project was not fulfilled, and the fragments preserved – elaborated during the 1910's – were published posthumously in 1920 and 1930 as a series of articles, later to be brought together by Gherea's editors under the general title "On the Romanian Oligarchy".[41] By the time Gherea was engaged in this enterprise, however, the socialist depiction of the "oligarchy" as a component of the syndrome of retarded modernization was only one of many available, coming from all ideological families. In fact, the idea in question was part and parcel of the mode of thinking articulated around the discourse on the "forms without substance", and made its appearance much at the same time as the latter, in the conservative and nationalist thinking of the 1870's. In the parliamentary

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[40] Gherea, "Neoiobăgia", pp. 127-131.

[41] Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea, "[Despre oligarhia română]" [1914, 1920, 1930], în *Opere complete*, ed. de Ion Popescu-Puțuri et al., Bucureşti, Ed. Politică, vol. 5, 1978, pp. 176-231.

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speeches of Titu Maiorescu[42] and Petre P. Carp[43] and in the essays of Theodor Rosetti[44] and I. L. Caragiale,[45] Romanian society was described as left – with the gradual decline of the boyar nobility – at the hands of a parasitic class of state functionaries prone to avoid the risks of economic entrepreneurship, living on the spoils of the state and able to use the state levers as a means for squeezing out the economically productive classes of a disproportionately large amount of income, itself put to no other use but the aping of elite lifestyles prevalent in western metropolitan cities. In the stream of political articles with a nationalist traditionalist bent coming from the pen of Mihai Eminescu, the same theory acquired the dimension of xenophobia, the "parasitic class" being denounced here as a cluster of foreign and ethnically mixed profiteers of cosmopolitan modernization, spread over the body of indigenous peasantry from neighboring European societies.[46] The anti-Semitic doctrinaire A.C. Cuza took over the same idea in its Eminescian formulation, making of it the cornerstone of his own political doctrine.[47] On the Left, Stere subscribed to the same way of thinking already in the 1890's,[48] while at the turn of the century the socialist dissenters H. Sanielevici and Ştefan Antim took the

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42 Titu Maiorescu, "Asupra reformei legii pentru instrucțiunea publică" [1876], in *Discursuri parlamentare*, ed. de Constantin Schifirneț, Bucureşti, Albatros, vol. 1, 2001 [1897, 1915], pp. 229-253.

43 P. P. Carp, *Discursuri parlamentare*, ed. de Marcel Duță, Bucureşti, Grai şi Suflet, 2000.

44 Theodor Rosetti, "Despre direcțiunea progresului nostru" [1874], in Eugen Lovinescu, coord., *Antologia ideologiei junimiste*, Bucureşti, Casa Şcoalelor, 1942, pp. 117-162.

45 I. L. Caragiale, "Politică şi cultură" [1896], in *Publicistică şi corespondență*, ed. de Marcel Duță, Bucureşti, Grai şi Suflet, 1999, pp. 98-104.

46 Dumitru Murăraşu, *Naționalismul lui Eminescu*, ed. de Oliviu Tocaciu, Bucureşti, Pacifica, 1994 [1932].

47 A. C. Cuza, *Țăranii şi clasele dirigente*, Iaşi, n. p., 1895.

48 Stere, "Din notițele unui observator ipocondric".

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bureaucratic oligarchy, self-proclaimed as "bourgeois" and centered around the Liberal Party, as the main target of criticism in their advocacy for free trade liberalism.[49] Still, the most forceful exposition of the same theory at the moment Gherea offered his own elaboration of it came from the conservative Constantin Rădulescu-Motru, whose 1904 book entitled *Romanian Culture and Politics for the Sake of Politics* contains a masterful description of the self-perpetuating Romanian political industry.[50]

4. The thread of critical sociology so far surveyed continued to unfold in the interwar period. However, the early 1920's brought a revolutionizing novelty which completely changed the pattern of intellectual life. In the pre-war period no vocal advocacy in favor of the status-quo had existed, and accordingly the various schools of social criticism offered their competing models of development while agreeing in the main on the sociological understanding of the syndrome of backwardness and on the neo-feudal and bureaucratic falsification of capitalism in the Romanian setting. Now, any such ideological attack on the modernizing establishment had to confront the sociological apologetics of the existing order and ideological counter-attack against the entire welter of anti-oligarchic social criticism offered by Ştefan Zeletin and Eugen Lovinescu. Zeletin's *The Romanian Bourgeoisie* – published in book format in 1925 but whose constituent parts started to appear in 1921[51] – and Lovinescu's *History of Modern Romanian Civilization* –

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49 H. Sanielevici, *Încercări critice*, Bucureşti, Carol Göbl, 1903; Ştefan Antim, *Chestiunea socială în România*, Bucureşti, Imprimeria "La Roumanie", 1908.

50 Constantin Rădulescu-Motru, "Cultura română şi politicianismul" [1904], in *Personalismul energetic şi alte scrieri*, ed. de Gh. Al. Cazan şi Gheorghe Pienescu, Bucureşti, Ed. Eminescu, 1984. pp. 1-104.

51 Ştefan Zeletin, *Burghezia română*, ed. de C. D. Zeletin, Bucureşti, Humanitas, 1991 [1925].

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published in three volumes in 1924-1926[52] – were lengthy pieces of historical sociology conceived as analyses of Romanian modernization, and meant to offer a rationalization of the existing distribution of wealth and power, while at the same time rescuing the XIXth century liberal elite from the various accusations to which it had been exposed. They both presented the Romanian experience of occidentalization as a constant confrontation between the liberal politicians' sound intuition of realities and the cultural elites' incapacity to come to terms with the pace of change, accompanied by their attempt to escape from the iron cage of bourgeois modernity through the gates of traditionalist or progressive utopias.

Of the two rationalizations of authoritarian liberalism, the Zeletinian one is most striking for the theoretical underpinning it adopted. Reading Marx through the interpretation given by Rudolf Hilferding in his *Finance Capital*,[53] Zeletin drew from him arguments against the central statements of Romanian critical sociology, related to the distorted nature of local capitalist modernization. Instead of understanding this last one as consisting in a deviation from the western path of development, he characterized it as simply a replica of a previous stage in the western economic and social evolution. It was by such means that, accepting the by then generally shared description of Romanian oligarchic system as valid, Zeletin justified its existence as a XIXth century re-embodiment on the periphery of Europe of those XVIIth and XVIIIth century institutional arrangements of monarchical absolutism which had enabled the most advanced states of the continent to pass through the first, mercantilist stage in the evolution of

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52 Eugen Lovinescu, *Istoria civilizației române moderne*, vols. 1-3, ed. de Z. Ornea, Bucureşti, Minerva, 1992 [1924-1926].

53 Laurence Harris, "Finance Capital", in Tom Bottomore et al., eds., *A Dictionary of Marxist Thought*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1983, pp. 172-177.

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capitalism. Under the façade of liberal parliamentarianism adopted as an international requirement of civilized public life, Zeletin explained, Romanian society spontaneously developed precisely those political structures and interventionist economic practices that were likely to watch over the growth of an infant, "commercial" capitalism unable to sustain itself through the sheer forces of the market. While relying on Marx in order to argue that the much abused idea of the disjunction between forms and substance in Romania was just a conventional wisdom imposed by a deplorable dilettante sociology – as the modern institutional forms were indeed placed on the firm foundations of an economic capitalist substance belonging to the commercial and mercantilist variety – Zeletin also developed his interpretation of Marxism into the prediction that the fate of international economy was a gradual evolution towards socialism, to be accomplished from above, under the aegis of monopolistic, financial capitalism. Skipping the intermediate stage of free market liberalism – together with its liberal political counterpart – that western societies had briefly experienced in the Manchesterian period, Romania would leave behind the authoritarian-interventionist practices of the era of commercial capitalism only to rediscover them under a new guise, when embarking on the world-wide path of a renewed authoritarianism in accordance with the requirements of financial capitalism. Placing the final advent of socialism in the distant and hardly foreseeable future, Zeletin allowed for the Romanian oligarchy of bureaucratic origins recently acceded to direct economic power through its control over the cartel of banking institutions obedient to the Liberal Party a long era of undisturbed predominance.[54]

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[54] Ştefan Zeletin, "Neoliberalismul" [1926], in *Neoliberalismul*, ed. de C. D. Zeletin, Bucureşti, Scripta, 1992 [1927], pp. 83-100.

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Zeletin's appropriation of the Marxist legacy for building a defense of the *status quo* obliged him to deny the legitimacy of the other uses of Marxism influential at the time in the country. After having been employed by Stere for an advocacy in favor of political democracy based on a smallholder peasant economy, and by Gherea as an intellectual instrument for rejecting the pseudo-capitalist practices of the Liberal oligarchy and demanding a wholesale adoption of capitalism preparing the ground for socialism, now the ideology of revolution was being domesticated by Zeletin as a reinforcement of oligarchic politics coupled with a state-driven industrializing economy. Whatever the practical implications of his teachings, Zeletin claimed, his reading of Marxism stood closer to the spirit of the debated doctrine than either the populist or the social-democratic interpretations. In fact, the origins of the last two schools' theoretical faults were to be searched for not in the international Marxist tradition, but in the indigenous intellectual environment – pervaded by the spirit of nostalgic traditionalism and fear of modernity – that had put its imprint on the local varieties of the Left. Together with the entire "critical culture", Romania's self-proclaimed Marxists had unnecessarily revised the original doctrine as to make room for the idea that societies could take various trajectories of modernization, themselves breeding specific social forms. Denying this, Zeletin emphasized the Marxist contention that the western capitalist and industrial breakthrough had shown, once and for all, the path that all societies were bound to take on the road to modernization. Connected to this, there was the related contention that no disjunction between forms and substance could be deemed to exist in Romania and the countries of retarded modernization generally, as no instance of social change induced from top down could be revealed by the historical record. Believing that super-structural modernization could take ahead of the transformations in the sphere of economy

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and society, Gherea had falsified the spirit of Marxism which the prophet of oligarchic-induced socialism claimed to have recovered.

On the Left, the challenge posed by the new "modernist" sociology was picked up by the peasantist theorists Virgil Madgearu[55] and Gheorghe Zane[56] and the social-democrats Lotar Rădăceanu and Şerban Voinea. It was in the context of the latter two's attempt to defend Gherism against the accusations leveled on it by Zeletin that the theory of the bureaucratic oligarchy was given its most sophisticated expression. It was also this final formulation of the theory which Pătrăşcanu took as encapsulating the essence of socialist Marxist heterodoxy. Retrospectively, it appears as quite ironical that precisely such a pathetic attempt to reassert the identity of Marxism as the intellectual foundation of left-wing politics came to embody, for Pătrăşcanu and his followers in the post-1945 Romanian scholarship, the deviationist nature of democratic socialism. Indeed, the interwar disciples of Gherea set out on their enterprise horrified by the fact that Marx could be made to speak as to present the hated *status quo* as the best of all possible worlds. Keen to dissociate Marxism from the semblance of establishment respectability insidiously bestowed on it by Zeletin, they offered complementary pleadings: the 1926 book *Oligarchic Marxism* authored by Voinea – the pen name of Gaston Boeuve, a Frenchman with strong Romanian connections[57] – took a page by page critical reading of Zeletin's *The Romanian Bourgeoisie*, in order to prove it as an intellectual prestidigitation with no

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55 Virgil Madgearu, *Agrarianism, capitalism, imperialism*, ed. de Ludovic Bathory, Cluj-Napoca, Dacia, 1999 [1936].

56 Gheorghe Zane, "Burghezia română şi marxismul", in *Viaţa românească* 19: 2, 1927, pp. 244-260; 19: 3, 1927, pp. 323-334.

57 Paul H. Stahl, ed., *Şerban Voinea, 1894-1969. Contribution à l'histoire de la social-démocratie roumaine,* Paris, Sociétés Européennes, 1990.

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scientific value,[58] while Rădăceanu's series of articles "The Romanian Oligarchy", published between 1924 and 1927, developed at great length the theory of the non-capitalist and non-feudal ruling oligarchy, left unfinished by Gherea, taking pains to underline all the way Zeletin's errors on the same issues.[59] As to the side of critique, both authors denied that XIXth century Romanian economy could be described, in the Zeletinian fashion, as a variety of "commercial capitalism". Voinea simply negated any meaning to such a notion, maintaining that, while the mere circulation of capitals could be ascertained in all historical ages and was indeed ascertainable in Romanian lands long before the threshold of modernization, one could not speak properly about a local emergence of capitalism as long as such capitals were not accumulated and put to work extensively in enterprises based on wage labor, something that even Zeletin had accepted that it was only barely starting to take place on a large scale in the predominantly agrarian Romanian economy. Rădăceanu, instead, explained that Romania's participation to the world market as an exporter of crops was not enough for transforming relationships of production at the local level in a capitalist fashion, but on the contrary induced the rise of a neo-feudal economy, as part of the syndrome of semi-colonialism. Once again, the sociological wisdom shared by social-democracy with the other currents of social criticism was reasserted: Romania had deviated from the western trajectory of development, and it had to return on that path of evolution in order to get prepared for socialism. According to the new assessment given by the two socialists at the middle of the 1920's, in light of their polished and expanded Gherist

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[58] Şerban Voinea, *Marxism oligarhic. Contribuţie la problema dezvoltării capitaliste a României*, Bucureşti, Brănişteanu, 1926.

[59] Lotar Rădăceanu, "Oligarhia română", in *Arhiva pentru ştiinţă şi reformă socială* 5: 3-4, 1924, pp. 497-532; 6: 1-2, 1926, pp. 160-184; 6: 3-4, 1927, pp. 435-459.

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theory, the prospects for a genuine capitalist development were somewhat brighter than in the near past: the oligarchy was still the dominant power in society, but a new entrepreneurial bourgeoisie, hostile to the bureaucratic-interventionist edifice, was gradually evolving. No matter how unnatural such a strategy might have appeared, there was no better choice for the socialist Left and its proletarian electorate but to take an alliance with those developing agents of capitalism, such as to jointly demolish their oligarchic common enemy and to liberate the forces of social evolution from the chains of distorted modernization.

5. Speaking in the name of social democratic Marxism, Rădăceanu and Voinea gave a renewed statement in favor of the whole critical sociology. Rejecting the theory of oligarchy as a mere tactical artifice of social democracy, meant to offer justifications for a politics of compromise, Pătrăşcanu went on to deny the very notion of a plurality of modernization trajectories and context-bound social formations. As contained in his two books *Basic Problems of Romania* of 1944[60] and *A Century of Social Unrest, 1821-1907* of 1945,[61] Pătrăşcanu's vision of social evolution on the agrarian periphery was even stricter than Zeletin's in terms of the contention that any attempt to alter Marx's view of social evolution as to make it cover the phenomena of underdevelopment could only lead not to an addition to the doctrine, but to its falsification. There was no sense in discussing about a distortion of capitalism into the arrangements of neo-serfdom, Pătrăşcanu maintained, and neither in believing that the ruling class could be of another nature than either feudal or bourgeois. Since the middle of the XVIIIth century, when the peasant's dues towards the boyar landholder were largely converted from corveé into a

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60 Pătrăşcanu, *Problemele de bază ale României.*

61 Idem, *Un veac de frământări sociale, 1821-1907*, Bucureşti, Ed. Politică, 1969 [1945].

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tithe in kind and, later, in money, the Romanian lands went from the stage of feudal economy into that of the "economy of serfdom", described by Pătrăşcanu as a mixture between elements of both feudalism and capitalism. Such a combination was not to be understood, however, in the fashion of Gherea, as a perverse fusion leading to a social system peculiar to retarded modernization, but simply as a juxtaposition between a decreasing traditionalist social segment and an expanding modern capitalist one, in which social relationships pertaining to both worlds could be found operating together. Romanian capitalism was in the XIXth century much more powerful than Gherea, Rădăceanu and Voinea wanted it to be, while no serious doubts could be raised about its "authenticity". As for the interwar period, capitalism reigned supreme, and even displayed the classical symptoms of crisis and decadence preparing the inevitable downfall. Indeed, having to cope with the phenomenon of Romanian radical Right, Pătrăşcanu managed to explain it, in his 1944 book *Under Three Dictatorships*, in light of the Marxist theory of fascism, as a creation of decadent monopolistic capitalism pressured by working class activism.[62]

We should not be misled, however, into thinking that Pătrăşcanu's reversal from the Gherist sociological innovations into a rigid view of linear modernization meant a wholesale adoption of the deterministic ways of thinking characteristic to Second International orthodox Marxism. On the contrary, Pătrăşcanu's intellectual enterprise belonged together with the Leninist deviation from the very same orthodoxy.

After having participated, alongside Plekhanov, to the rejection of populism in the name of the inevitability and beneficial nature of capitalist development in Russia, and joining in this way the argument of determinism against populist voluntarism, Lenin was soon to take a departure

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62 Idem, *Sub trei dictaturi*, Bucureşti, Ed. Politică, 1970 [1944].

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from Plekhanovism precisely by a half-way return to voluntarism. Assessing Russian capitalist development as unavoidable but nevertheless still in an incipient phase, Plekhanov placed the prospects of socialist revolution in a rather distant future, making them conditional upon the previous completion of a bourgeois-democratic revolution meant to wipe away the remnants of feudalism and the political structures of absolutism, preparing the ground for unhindered capitalist expansion, and leading to the maturation of working class' social consciousness and political involvement. Taking a leaf from the "Jacobin" or "Blanquist" stage in the evolution of Marx – consummated around 1848[63] – Lenin denounced Plekhanov's reluctance in embracing the design of immediate revolution as cowardice, justifying his call for a precipitation of the stages of social transformation in the light of a different assessment of the forces at work in Russian society at the time. If measured by the intensity and nature of class conflict it exhibited, Lenin maintained, Russian capitalism appeared as more advanced than Plekhanov allowed it to be, when looking to it from the standpoint of the level of development reached by the forces of production. Social tensions characteristic to the waning world of feudalism were juxtaposed, in Russia, with different ones of a truly capitalist nature. It was for this reason that, contrary to what Plekhanov thought, the bourgeois-democratic and socialist revolutions could be compressed into one single social and political upheaval, the proletariat and its intellectual vanguard being able to take part in various, but overlapping class alliances, targeting on the one side against the remnants of the old, feudal-absolutist regime and on the other against the blossoming capitalist order, dragging as such to the grave both social-political structures at one stroke and cleaning the ground for socialism.[64]

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[63] Lichtheim, *Marxism*, pp. 51-62.

[64] John Plamenatz, *German Marxism and Russian Communism*, London, Longmans, 1954; Lichtcheim, "Social-democracy and

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It was precisely this vision of overlapping fault-lines of class struggle, offered by Lenin as a projection into the future and a political program for precipitating socialist revolution in the midst of agrarian backwardness, that Pătrăşcanu used as a heuristic tool for rounding up his understanding of Romanian past social development. Unlike the other analysts of Romanian modernization, he liked to underscore the importance of internal social dynamics as a factor of change, instead of making the transformations of local society primarily dependent on the exogenous factors of world capitalist expansion and acculturation. While abstaining from elaborating a prospective ideological justification for the Romanian proletarian revolution, he implicitly presented the Leninist revolutionary design as the logical conclusion of a long term pattern operating on the Romanian soil from the beginning of the XIXth century. Presenting the very different upheavals of 1821, 1848 and 1907 as instances of fully developed social revolutions, he read into them Lenin's conception that, given the presence of various types of social conflict in the same historical context, successive stages in the revolutionary process could be telescoped and, as such, the outcome of the entire process precipitated.

6. Unlike Lenin's rationalization for undemocratic revolutionary practices, Pătrăşcanu's argument about the compression of revolutionary stages cannot be said to have played a significant role in the Romanian communist takeover. Otherwise, his rejection of the critical sociology's accumulated wisdom, which at some point had been made to cling on the idea of the non-capitalist "oligarchy", was doomed to have a greater posterity than his own abrupt fall

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Communism"; Walicki, *Marxism and the Leap to the Kingdom of Freedom*, pp. 269-302; Richard Pipes, *Communism. A History of the Intellectual and Political Movement*, London, Phoenix Press, 2002, pp. 21-52;

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from the top communist officialdom could have made us to believe. His books have never become must-read pieces, either before of after his purge or, indeed, after his partial rehabilitation. Still, his polemic against the social-democrats of the 1920's has continued to influence our understanding of both social change and social thought in Romania. Of the heretic sociological views he rejected, some could be gradually rediscovered, as was the case with Gherea's analysis of neo-serfdom and of the top down evolution of capitalism in backward countries, impressively elaborated by Henri H. Stahl and eventually poured by him into the international debate of the 1970's on "peripheral modes of production".[65] However, neither Stahl or other sociologists, nor Z. Ornea or other historians of social thought could ever go beyond Pătrăşcanu's denial of the conception of a bureaucratic oligarchy as a social category of its own, different from both the declining boyardom and the still infant entrepreneurial bourgeoisie, and acting as the dominant force in Romanian society. Indeed, they always presented this idea as either a Marxist heresy or a misconception of conservative provenance.[66]

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65 Henri H. Stahl, *Les anciennes communautés villageoises roumaines*, Bucarest-Paris, Académie Roumaine-Éditions du C.N.R.S., 1969; Idem, "Théories de C. Dobrogeanu Gherea sur les lois de la penetration du capitalisme dans les pays retardaires", in *Review* (of the "Fernand Braudel Center") 2: 1, 1978, pp. 101-114; Chirot, *Social Change in a Peripheral Society.* See also John G Taylor, *From Modernization to Modes of Production: a Critique of the Sociologies of Development and Underdevelopment*, London, Macmillan, 1979; John Weeks, "Non-capitalist Modes of Production", in Tom Bottomore et al., eds., *A Dictionary of Marxist Thought*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1983, pp. 353-355.

66 See below, chapter 5. For the most extensive re-elaboration of this idea in contemporary comparative historical sociology see Andrew C. Janos, *East Central Europe in the Modern World: the Politics of the Borderlands from Pre- to Post-communism*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2000. To assess, in this respect, the originality of Romanian social criticism against the

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At the moment when it became an international affair centered in the United States, after the Second World War, theorizing modernization was based on the widely shared assumption that societies proceeding from agrarianism to industrialism were bound to pass through the same succession of stages, on the same path of evolution.[67] Gradually, the discipline moved towards embracing the opposite stance,[68] and the understanding of differences and variations along the process of social change has never stopped to deepen ever since.[69] In pre-communist Romania,

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general background of international social thought, both Marxist and non-Marxist, see also András Hegedüs, "Bureaucracy", in Tom Bottomore et al., eds., *A Dictionary of Marxist Thought*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1983, pp. 57-59; Philip Abrams, *Historical Sociology*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1994 [1982].

67 Walt W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: a Non-communist Manifesto*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1960; Cyril E. Black, *The Dynamics of Modernization: a Study in Comparative History*, New York, Harper Torchbooks, 1966; Alex Inkeles, "Making Men Modern: on the Causes and Consequences of Individual Change in Six Developing Countries", in *American Journal of Sociology* 75: 2, 1969, pp. 208-255.

68 Reinhard Bendix, "Tradition and Modernity Reconsidered", in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 9: 3, 1967, pp. 292-346; Joseph R. Gusfield, "Tradition and Modernity: Misplaced Polarities in the Study of Social Change", in *American Journal of Sociology* 72: 4, 1967, pp. 351-362; Samuel P. Huntington, "The Change to Change: Modernization, Development and Politics", in *Comparative Politics* 3: 3, 1971, pp. 283-322; Dean C. Tipps, "Modernization Theory and the Comparative History of Societies: a Critical Perspective", in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 15: 2, 1973, pp. 199-226.

69 Theda Skocpol, ed., *Vision and Method in Historical Sociology*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984; Andrew C. Janos, *Politics and Paradigms. Changing Theories of Change in the Social Sciences*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1986; J. Timmons Roberts, Amy Hite, eds., *From Modernization to Globalization: Perspectives on Development and Social Change*, Malden, Mass., Blackwell, 1999.

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by contrast, dissatisfaction with the course of social and political development originally led social criticism, in the 1860's, to a pluralistic view of the process of modernization. Describing prevailing realities as relying on a distortion of capitalism led the reflective minds of the period towards emphasizing the idea that the very interaction between societies at various levels of development was likely to push the delayed developing ones on trajectories further apart from the western modernization "norm". Marxism contributed heavily to such an understanding, and emerged deeply transformed from the intellectual encounter with the puzzle of explaining the nature of peripheral capitalism. Indeed, in its populist and social-democratic embodiments, it served for legitimizing either a politics of democratization or a sustained pleading for capitalism. It was towards the end of that era that the pluralistic view of modernization associated with a prudent search for alleviating its pains was faced with conceptions which emphasized the uniformities of social change.[70] Marxism could be put to work for the new task, and it served well for justifying the right to rule of plutocratic bureaucracies, as well as for planning their violent destruction by dictatorial means. Once the flames of permanent revolution have died down, Romanians are faced with the ghost of an oligarchic capitalism whose past embodiment has too often been enmeshed in the aura of ideological infallibility. Besides describing the contradictory ideological uses of Marxism in pre-communist Romania, this paper intended to point to a way out of this sharp alternative between existing historical models.

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[70] Daniel Chirot, "Neoliberal and Social Democratic Theories of Development: the Zeletin-Voinea Debate Concerning Romania's Prospects in the 1920's and Its Contemporary Importance", in Kenneth Jowitt, ed., *Social Change in Romania, 1860-1940. A Debate on Development in a European Nation*, Berkeley, University of California, Institute of International Studies, 1978, pp. 31-52.

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5. Paradigm Change in Critical Sociology: Center and Periphery Perceptions

Romanians tend to take as trivial some ideas usually advertized as resulting from a social science paradigm change of the 1960's: that world-wide modernization proceeds on various paths; and that modernizing change can be induced top-down, by the means of state intervention. This is because, unlike in the West, social criticism consciously devoted to the issue of modernization started here by advancing precisely such contentions, in order to make room much later on to the opposite – unilinear – view, formulated as part of local ideological confrontations. Still, they will not react in the same way when offered the idea that state-induced modernization is likely to produce a peculiar social stratification, featuring over-bureaucratization and a

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non-capitalist bureaucratic class. This is somewhat surprising, as such ideas acted as a central thread running through the local social thought of pre-communist times. With the hindsight provided by the works of Andrew C. Janos, the fragment of intellectual history structured around the conceptualizations of the bureaucratic elite is disclosed below, and placed against the background of the conceptualizations – equally loaded ideologically – of the landholding class, initiated beforehand and in a different political setting. The aspect of strange cultural oblivion is stressed as much as that of sociological precociousness.

1. It sometimes happens that the endeavor to give account historically of paradigm changes raises objections of triviality. While present commonplaces can be easily traced back to the time of their incubation, it is generally harder to convey a vivid sense of their original weirdness. Such difficulties can increase, depending on the audiences targeted. As it also often happens, however, such contextualized disappointed reactions are misleading, as they hide the audiences' ignorance of some specific implications of the same theoretical models appearing to them as seemingly eternal truths. Romania is a good testing ground for these statements. There is one particular intellectual turning point of the sort mentioned above that one must take caution not to advertize too enthusiastically when addressing, here, a group of students in social sciences and humanities. Still, there is one particular sociological insight issuing from the same reframing of theoretical views that one can hardly find as something resembling established wisdom throughout all relevant compartments of local scholarship.

The turn from a unilinear to a multilinear view of the process of social change and political development, taken by American and international comparative historical sociology and theory of modernization in the 1960's, has many times

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been presented – and in a peculiarly forceful way by Andrew C. Janos – , as a genuine paradigm transformation in the field.[1] At the time the theoretical revolution in question was taking place, people engaged in the enterprise felt the need to underline the fact that they were arguing their case against the background of a deeply entrenched conception about the course of social evolution, whose record went back to the late XVIIIth and early XIXth centuries – when the very distinction between "tradition" and "modernity" was first intimated by European social philosophers – and which had never been significantly put under question meanwhile.[2] Reasons for dissatisfaction against the existing paradigm – inherited by what was to be labeled later on as the "classical theory of modernization" from the still more classical sociological theories, stretching from the Scottish Enlightenment to Talcott Parsons – were of various kinds.[3] One of them, of a special concern for the present argument, was the perceived inability of the existing comparative studies to make adequate room, in their explanations, for the "formal structure of governmental authority, which differs from, and is relatively independent of, the group formations arising from the social and economic organization

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1 Andrew C. Janos, *Politics and Paradigms. Changing Theories of Change in the Social Sciences*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1986; Idem, "Paradigms Revisited. Productionism, Globality, and Postmodernity in Comparative Politics", in *World Politics* 50: 1, 1997, pp. 118-149.

2 Reinhard Bendix, "Tradition and Modernity Reconsidered", in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 9: 3, 1967, pp. 292-346.

3 Joseph R. Gusfield, "Tradition and Modernity: Misplaced Polarities in the Study of Social Change", in *American Journal of Sociology* 72: 4, 1967, pp. 351-362; Samuel P. Huntington, "The Change to Change: Modernization, Development and Politics", in *Comparative Politics* 3: 3, 1971, pp. 283-322; Dean C. Tipps, "Modernization Theory and the Comparative History of Societies: a Critical Perspective", in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 15: 2, 1973, pp. 199-226.

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of society".[4] Against the established view of modernization issuing, everywhere, from the spontaneous and self-induced dynamism of the social body and proceeding from bottom up, on the basis of endogenous factors, Reinhard Bendix argued that, except for the original countries of the "dual revolution", the transformation from agrarian traditionalism to modern industrialism has been propagated under the impact of exogenous forces of change and propelled from top down, through state machineries assigned, in late modernizing societies, with greater roles than they had originally been designed to perform. Framed in such a general sociological guise, the argument took advantage of previous analyses of the changing patterns of governmental intervention in the industrializing efforts of later developing societies,[5] while at the same time drawing on the Weberian emphasis on bureaucratic rationalization as a central feature of the modernizing process.[6]

Such early attempts to disclose the contours of state-induced modernization impelled by external forces tended to take a rather positive assessment of its achievements and an optimistic view of its prospects, a tendency maintained in some later works.[7] By contrast, the most sophisticated theoretical and historical perspective elaborated in the same framework, a perspective that Andrew C. Janos offered by reference to pre-1945 evolution of Hungary,[8] Romania[9] and

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4 Bendix, "Tradition and Modernity", p. 327.

5 Alexander Gerschenkron, *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective. A Book of Essays*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1976 [1962].

6 *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. and transl. by H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, New York, Oxford University Press, 1958 [1946], pp. 196-244.

7 Reinhard Bendix, *Kings or People. Power and the Mandate to Rule*, Berkeley, The University of California Press, 1978.

8 Andrew C, Janos, "The Decline of Oligarchy: Bureaucratic and Mass Politics in the Age of Dualism", in Andrew C. Janos, William B. Slottman, eds., *Revolution in Perspective: Essays on*

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the whole region of East-Central Europe,[10] reached different conclusions. This view likes to underline the long-term effects that the substitution of government intervention for capitalist economic dynamism and bourgeois-type social differentiation had on the peripheral road to the modern world. Instead of acting as a temporary modernizing design enabling late-developing countries to join, at a later stage, the historical trajectory pioneered by the North-Atlantic societies at the beginning of the modern age, the strategy of development relying on bureaucratic initiative as the driving force of change relapsed into producing a new pattern of social stratification, whose most salient feature was to chronically impede the expansion of independent economic entrepreneurship, to the benefit of over-bureaucratization, political entrepreneurship and the use of the state as an "instrument of income equalization – not, to be sure, among the different strata of the local populations, but between the elites of the backward and advanced societies".[11] Further, post-1914 peripheral political radicalism and authoritarian

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the Hungarian Soviet Republic of 1919, Berkeley, The University of California Press, 1971, pp. 1-61; Idem, *The Politics of Backwardness in Hungary, 1825-1945*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1982.

9 Idem, "Modernization and Decay in Historical Perspective: the Case of Romania", in Kenneth Jowitt, ed., *Social Change in Romania, 1860-1940. A Debate on Development in a European Nation*, Berkeley, University of California, Institute of international Studies, 1978, pp. 72-116.

10 Idem, "The One-Party State and Social Mobilization: East Europe between the Wars", in Samuel P. Huntington and Clement H. Moore, eds., *Authoritarian Politics in Modern Society. The Dynamics of Established One-Party Systems*, New York, Basic Books, Inc., 1970, pp. 204-236; Idem, "The Politics of Backwardness in Continental Europe, 1780-1945", in *World Politics* 41: 2, 1989, pp. 325-358; Idem, *East Central Europe in the Modern World. The Politics of the Borderlands from Pre- to Post-communism*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2000.

11 Janos, *East Central Europe*, p. 88.

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politics were predicated upon the shortcomings of the same mechanisms of modernization that drained social resources to the interest of the very state structures originally meant to expand them.[12]

In both its optimistic and its pessimistic embodiments, the theory summarized so far pertains to the large body of historical and sociological thinking asserting the existence of a multiplicity of modernizing trajectories. In many of its versions, this conception also takes a stance opposite to that of classical sociological theorizing – of the structural-functionalist, Marxian and Weberian stripes alike – regarding the effects of western influences on non-western – or less western – societies, underscoring that contacts between societies placed on different levels of development – raising specific reactions from the part of disadvantaged elites and breeding policies of "catching up" that promote the interests of the same elites – are likely to push the later-developing ones on paths of evolution further apart from the national historical trajectories that they intend to emulate. Originally animated by either the ideal to circumscribe the social preconditions of successful liberal democratization[13] or a militant neo-Marxist critique of global capitalist exploitation,[14] such pluralist views of modernization got reframed under the impact of geopolitical restructuration, before and after the demise of international communism,[15] surviving the

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12 *Ibid.*, pp. 148-217.

13 Barrington Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, Boston, Beacon Press, 1967; Perry Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State*, London, Verso, 1974.

14 Immanuel Wallerstein, „The Rise and Future Demise of the Capitalist World System: Concepts for Comparative Analysis", in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 16: 4, 1974, pp. 387-415; Thomas R. Shannon, *An Introduction to the World-System Perspective*, sec. ed., Boulder, Colo., Westview Press, 1996.

15 Daniel Chirot, *Social Change in the Modern Era*, San Diego, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1986; Idem, "Why Must There Be a Last Cycle? The Prognosis for the World Capitalist System and a

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challenges of postmodernist epistemological fragmentation and even building upon the crisis of neoliberalism.[16]

As hinted at above, educated Romanians will have ambivalent reactions when offered this fragment of intellectual history. On the one hand, they will tend to mock as a mere commonplace the idea of peripheral social change induced top-down, through state levers and following an original modernizing impulse coming from outside. Indeed, school textbooks and standard works of national history have taught them, for long decades, about the "theory of forms without substance" as an important part of the local cultural patrimony. Articulated in the 1860's, the ideas that came under this label produced a corpus of social and cultural criticism that complained about the maladjustment between institutional and legal imports and local economic performances, social forms and cultural habits.[17] While describing the outcome of emulative modernization from above with bleak overtones which strongly recall the later conceptualizations of prismatic societies,[18] Romanian proto-sociologists of development also formulated generalizations about the specific course of peripheral social evolution. To

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Prescription for Its Diagnosis", in Georgi M. Derluguian, Scott L. Greer, eds., *Questioning Geopolitics. Political Projects in a Changing World-System*, Westport, Greenwood Press, 2000, pp. 69-83; Christopher Chase-Dunn, Salvatore J. Babones, eds., *Global Social Change. Historical and Comparative Perspectives*, Baltimore, The John Hopkins University Press, 2006.

16 David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1989; Idem, *Spaces of Global Capitalism. Towards a Theory of Uneven Geographical Development*, London, Verso, 2006. See also Shmuel N. Eisenstadt, ed., *Multiple Modernities*, New Brunswick, Transaction Publishers, 2002.

17 Andrei Oțetea et al., *Istoria poporului român*, Bucureşti, Ed. Ştiințifică, 1970; Z. Ornea, *Junimea şi junimismul*, Bucureşti, Ed. Eminescu, 1975; Vlad Georgescu, *Istoria ideilor politice româneşti, 1369-1878*, München, Ion Dumitru Verlag, 1987.

18 Fred Riggs, *Administration in Developing Countries. The Theory of Prismatic Society*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1964.

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be sure, this pre-communist sociological precociousness did not fail to lead, during the later decades of communism and after 1989, to some naïve or heavily ideological pieces of nationalist intellectual history, which disregarded the comparative setting of peripheral ideological reactions to modernization in order to extol the older insights into the nature of state-led social change and of its dysfunctions as a "Romanian brand".[19] Still, the less nationalistic people interested in the topic – which are definitely an overwhelming majority – will look suspiciously to both the claims to originality on behalf of local social thought and the historical reconstructions of the dramatic paradigm shift that the discipline of modernization theory is said to have encountered about 50 years ago, following more than 150 years of undisturbed reproduction of the older paradigm based on the ideas of unilinear, bottom-up and endogenously generated modernization.

On the other hand, however, this is by far not the case with the idea of a social phenomenon diagnosed by Janos as a central characteristic of peripheral modernization: the peculiar social stratification, issuing from the special role adopted by the state as an instrument of change and displaying the bureaucracy as a social group of its own, acting, to the detriment of the ever-infant and never politically significant capitalist bourgeoisie, as the real counterpart of the declining landholding elite in the social and political space. Neither the self-congratulatory nationalistic re-readings of theorizing about the disjunctions between political "forms" and social "substance",[20] nor the older or recent didactic

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19 Ilie Bădescu, *Sincronism european şi cultură critică românească*, Bucureşti, Ed. Ştiințifică şi Enciclopedică, 1984; Constantin Schifirneț, *Formele fără fond, un brand românesc*, Bucureşti, Comunicare.ro, 2007.

20 *Ibid.*

https://biblioteca-digitala.ro

histories of Romanian sociology[21] boast with this idea as a local contribution to the understanding of modernization or as an anticipation of later-day international wisdom in the field. It was thanks to Janos' works, corroborated by some other perspectives of East European modernization,[22] that, some time ago, I started to disclose the topic of the bureaucratic class as a central thread running through Romanian debates, from the 1860's to the 1940's, together with the strange history of its subsequent oblivion.[23]

Facing specific challenges, the reflective minds of the peripheries – starting with early XIXth century Germans, at the time uncomfortably aware of their peripheral position by comparison to Britain and France – prepared the 1960's paradigm change in modernization theory long before it was accomplished. While a global history of thinking on modernization is lacking, some segments of it have been visited and brought together with a view to either digging out theoretical statements of significance beyond the context of their emergence,[24] or tracing the long pedigrees of nefarious intellectual traditions and policy-making

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21 Miron Constantinescu, Ovidiu Bădina, Ernö Gall, *Sociological Thought in Romania*, transl. by Silviu Brucan, Bucharest, Meridiane, 1974; Maria Larionescu, *Istoria sociologiei româneşti*, Bucureşti, Ed. Universității din Bucureşti, 2007.

22 Henry L. Roberts, *Rumania. Political Problems of an Agrarian State*, Hamden, Conn., Archon Books, 1969 [1951]; Hugh Seton-Watson, "The Intellectuals and Revolution. Social Forces in Eastern Europe since 1848", in Richard Pares, A. J. P. Taylor, eds., *Essays Presented to Sir Lewis Namier*, London, Macmillan, 1956, pp. 394-430; Gale Stokes, "The Social Origins of East European Politics", in *East European Politics and Societies* 1: 1, 1986, pp. 30-74.

23 See above, chapters 2 and 4.

24 Andrzej Walicki, *The Controversy over Capitalism. Studies in the Social Philosophy of the Russian Populists*, Notre Dame, Ind., The University of Notre Dame Press, 1989 [1969]; Daniel Chirot, Thomas D. Hall, "World-System Theory", in *Annual Review of Sociology* 8, 1982, pp. 81-106.

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preconceptions.[25] The perspectives of this kind taken on the Romanian relevant intellectual record – and addressed to international audiences – fell, as a general rule, in the first category.[26] However, primarily interested as they were in disclosing the wider history of non-classical economic theorizing on the dependency syndrome and of neo-Marxist world-system analysis, they hardly give a clue to assessing the pivotal role that the topic of a bureaucratic class played in the same dynamics of social thought.[27] Actually, at least as far as Romania is concerned, all such historical contributions have to make sense of an intricate cultural heritage, displaying both precocious intellectual departures and an entrenched difficulty from the part of intellectual endeavors to disentangle mature science from mere ideology. The fate of two successive – and heavily ideological – Romanian sociologies of the ruling elites, initiated in the 1820's and the 1870's respectively, provides a good case in point.

2. The disentanglement of western historical sociology from the web of ideological advocacy, and its institutionalization as an academic discipline in its own terms, was completed in the period 1890-1920, around the figures of Durkheim

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25 Gavin Kitching, *Development and Underdevelopment in Historical Perspective. Populism, Nationalism and Industrialization*, sec. ed., London, Routledge, 1989.

26 Daniel Chirot, "Neoliberal and Social Democratic Theories of Development: the Zeletin-Voinea Debate Concerning Romania's Prospects in the 1920's and Its Contemporary Importance", in Kenneth Jowitt, ed., *Social Change in Romania, 1860-1940. A Debate on Development in a European Nation*, Berkeley, University of California, Institute of International Studies, 1978, pp. 31-52; Joseph L. Love, *Crafting the Third World. Theorizing Underdevelopment in Rumania and Brazil*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1996.

27 Love, *Crafting the Third World*, pp. 50-51.

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and Weber.[28] For sure, major theoretical constructions in the field could still be dramatically reshaped, in the same era, as ideological instruments meant to address changing political constellations, as was the case with Tönnies' "community"/"society" dichotomy, originally – in the 1880's – a value-neutral distinction between historical stages, increasingly turned by himself, subsequently, into a device for differentiating degrees of cultural malaise within the space of modernity[29] and finally appropriated by the rising conservative revolution of the 1920's.[30] Still, starting with those decades, sociological analysis – including those versions of it with a strong historical bent – was to act at least as much by providing external standards for the evaluation of ideological dynamics as by contributing to its unfolding.[31]

While the prehistory of the discipline went back to the ancient Greek cyclical theories of social evolution,[32] its modern proto-history bore, at its beginnings, a powerful mark of conservative ideology and Romantic nostalgia for the traditional world in the course of being displaced by the

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28 Anthony Giddens, "Classical Social Theory and the Origins of Modern Sociology", in *The American Journal of Sociology* 81: 4, 1976, pp. 703-729.

29 Arthur Mitzman, "Tönnies and German Society, 1887-1914: From Cultural Pessimism to the Celebration of the *Volksgemeinschaft*", in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 32: 4, 1971, pp. 507-524.

30 Peter Gay, *Weimar Culture. The Ousider as Insider*, New York, Norton, 2001 [1968], pp. 80, 96; Jeffrey Herf, *Reactionary Modernism. Technology, Culture and Politics in Weimar and the Third Reich*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984, pp. 18-49.

31 Richard Bellamy, "The Advent of the Masses and the Making of the Modern Theory of Democracy", and Antonino Palumbo, Alan Scott, "Weber, Durkheim and the Sociology of the Modern State", both in Terence Ball, Richard Bellamy, eds., *The Cambridge History of Twentieth-century Political Thought*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003, pp. 70-103, resp. 368-391.

32 Robert A. Nisbet, *Social Change and History*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1969.

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rapid advent of urbanism, industrialism, individualism and social equalization.[33] By contrast, Romanian social criticism was driven, initially, not by the sudden revelation of disruptive change but by the painful intimation of stagnation. Following the breaking down of the post-Byzantine, pan-Balkan and Orthodox cultural unity, and having engaged, together with the other peoples of the area, on a nationalist political path sustained by western ideas,[34] the Romanians discovered the state of backwardness that their society displayed by comparison to the more western ones. In the writings of the great boyar Dinicu Golescu, who most consistently practiced this comparison in the 1820's, social evils affecting the peasant masses were blamed on the bad habits and cultural primitivism of the landholding ruling elite to which the writer also belonged.[35] Golescu, who was to be seen, later on, as the "first Romanian populist",[36] stood at the origins of an intellectual tradition that brought together an ardent nationalist feeling, an enthusiastic pleading for modernization on the western model – most conspicuously embodied by France – and a harsh indictment of the boyar class. Together, westernizer nationalism and anti-boyar social criticism emerge, retrospectively, as the structuring recurring ideas of the remarkably unitary "oppositional" or "critical culture" of "fortyeightism", unfolding from the 1820's to the 1860's and centered upon the revolutionary experiments taking place in both

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33 Idem, *The Sociological Tradition*, New York, Basic Books, 1966; Bendix, "Tradition and Modernity".

34 Paschalis M. Kitromilides, *Enlightenment, Nationalism, Orthodoxy: Studies in the Culture and Political Thought of South-Eastern Europe*, Aldershot, Variorum, 1994.

35 Dinicu Golescu, *Însemnare a călătoriei mele*, ed. de D. Panaitescu-Perpessicius, Bucureşti, Ed de Stat pentru Literatură şi Artă, 1952 [1826]; Paul Cornea, *Originile romantismului românesc*, Bucureşti, Cartea Românească, 2008 [1972], pp. 33-100.

36 Alexandru D. Xenopol, *Istoria partidelor politice în România, de la origini până la 1866*, ed. de Constantin Schifirneţ, Bucureşti, Albatros, 2005 [1910], pp. 124-127.

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Wallachia and Moldavia, as well as among the Transylvanian Romanians of the Habsburg monarchy, in 1848.[37]

Appropriately, the supporters of this modernizing and oppositional discourse came increasingly from outside the stratum of great boyardom, the most vocal and influential of them, as Ion Heliade Rădulescu, Mihail Kogălniceanu and Nicolae Bălcescu, being representatives of the lesser nobility or even of a third estate origin. Political radicalization went hand in hand with the strengthening of the French-Western connection, due to stages of education abroad and of political exile, as well as with the formulation of deeper insights, sustained by a longer historical perspective, on the social predicament of the Wallachian and Moldavian principalities. The first Romanian historical sociology was elaborated as part of this ideological struggle. Scattered across several other utterances of the time,[38] it acquired the most characteristic expression in 1846 and 1850 writings of Bălcescu.[39] Conceived as interventions in the ongoing debate on the appropriateness and efficacy of land reform, meant to redress the grievances of the peasantry by the abolition of feudal arrangements, they stressed the moral side of the pleading in favor of emancipation, by arguing that peasant property rights had antedated the imposition of feudal servitude. Bălcescu went back to the times of the foundation of Romanian states in the XIVth century, depicting medieval society as composed overwhelmingly of free small-owners of land, and accordingly presenting the later advent of feudalism as a process of illegitimate and

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37 Al. Dima et al., coord., *Istoria literaturii române*, Bucureşti, Ed. Academiei R. S. R., vol. 2, 1968; Georgescu, *Istoria gândirii politice româneşti*.

38 Paul Cornea, M. Zamfir, coord., *Gândirea românească în epoca paşoptistă*, 1830-1860, Bucureşti, Ed. pentru Literatură, vols. 1-2, 1968-1969.

39 Nicolae Bălcescu, *Opere*, ed. de G. Zane şi Elena G. Zane, Bucureşti, Ed. Academiei R. S. R., vols. I and II, 1974 and 1982.

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abusive dispossession, made possible by external military pressures. Furthermore, tracing how "the ancient equality, in terms of rights and estate, was extinguished, and the social monstrosity of a whole country enslaved to several individuals came into being",[40] he described a process of progressive social decay, aggravated in turn by Ottoman domination, Greek-Phanariot infiltration, Russian reactionary social policies disguised as political protection and even legislative modernization in the form of the Organic Statutes, adopted in the 1830's in order to respond to opportunities of extensive agricultural exploitation on the large boyar domains, now connected with the international cereal market.

The fusion between early XIXth century East European modernizing liberalism and the democratic European Romantic nationalism springing from the turmoil of the 1830 revolutions has often been underlined.[41] Some recent comparative perspectives disclosed, moreover, an intellectual pattern common to most countries of the area, couched in the guise of a historical discourse meant to discover, in the depths of the national past, freedom-based, egalitarian and democratic arrangements. Such ideological historical constructions performed the function of entrenching the drive to revolutionary political change inspired by western models into an appropriately reframed cultural memory and local political culture, by presenting the modern ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity as having distant native counterparts.[42] The discourse on social history with a

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40 Idem, "Despre starea socială a muncitorilor plugari în Principatele Române în deosebite timpuri", in *Opere*, vol. 1, pp. 156-157.

41 Robin Okey, *Eastern Europe 1740-1985: Feudalism to Communism*, sec. ed., London, Unwin Hyman, 1989, pp. 59-83; Maciej Janowski, *Polish Liberal Thought before 1918*, transl. by Danuta Przekop, Budapest, Central European University Press, 2004, pp. 73-113.

42 Maciej Janowski, "Three Historians", in *CEU History Department Yearbook* 2001-2002, pp. 199-232; Diana Mishkova, "The Interesting Anomaly of Balkan Liberalism", in Iván Zoltán Dénes, ed., *Liberty and the Search for Identity. Liberal Nationalisms and*

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populist and democratic ring offered by the Romanian fortyeighters belonged, for sure, to the same ideological family, dedicated as it was to showing that "the real civilization is the one that derives from our bosom, by way of reforming and improving the institutions of the past with the ideas and successes of the present".[43] It also belonged together with the neighboring, South-Slav political discourses of the same era, due to its radical and messianic orientation. Indeed, far from mirroring the concerns of contemporary western liberalism for securing individual freedom against the encroachments of populist authoritarianism,[44] it borrowed heavily from pre-Marxist European socialism, envisioning an egalitarian and vaguely defined world of social harmony.[45] Its emphasis on the urgencies of nation building and consolidation over and above the policies of internal reform was, to the same extent, a region-wide trait. It possessed, nevertheless, some peculiar features. Unlike the Serbian or Bulgarian versions of political radicalism, it did not project back into the past the ideal of a populist agrarian socialism, lacking, in fact, any connection with the Russian populist currents of thought based on the idea of the *obshchina.*[46] Instead, it cultivated the vision of a purported original agrarian individualism. Still more significantly – and no matter how oddly such a stance was articulated with its socialist leanings –, the

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the Legacy of Empires, Budapest, Central European University Press, 2006, pp. 399-456.

43 MIhail Kogălniceanu, quoted in Mishkova, "The Interesting Anomaly of Balkan Liberalism", p. 440.

44 Guido de Ruggiero, *The History of European Liberalism*, transl. by R. G. Collingwood, Boston, Beacon Press, 1961 [1927].

45 G. Zane, "Saint-simonism şi fourierism în România", in *Studii*, ed. de Elena G. Zane, Bucureşti, Ed. Eminescu, 1980, pp. 61-81.

46 Traian Stoianovich, "The Pattern of Serbian Intellectual Evolution, 1830-1880", in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 1: 3, 1959, pp. 242-272; Gale Stokes, "Svetozar Marković in Russia", in *Slavic Review* 31: 3, 1972, pp. 611-625.

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fortyeighter oppositional discourse shared with the discourses defending the *status-quo* an unqualified preference for the European free trade economic liberalism of the Scottish sort, adopted through French interpretations.[47] This is certainly telling for the equally unqualified stance of fortyeighter critical culture in favor of letting free western influences to pervade Romanian society through all available channels.

The social predicament of 1848 was largely superseded by the agrarian reform of 1864, which divided the land between peasants and landlords, placing it under the provisions of bourgeois property rights and Napoleonic legislation, in the footsteps of the abolition of civic privileges in 1858. Still, the radical liberal historical sociology left an intricate legacy to the following Romanian engagement with understanding the country's social history. Emerged from within ideological advocacy, Romanian historical approaches to the topic were to be affected repeatedly by changing ideological climates. The "democratic" interpretation pioneered by Bălcescu came to be incorporated into the body of various readings of the past, differing in terms of both scientific premises and ideological allegiances. The first influential such appropriation took place in the first decade of the XXth century, close to the moment of the peasant revolt of 1907, when a new agrarian reform meant to consolidate insufficient peasant holdings was being envisioned. Making his case in association with the populist agrarian intellectual group indebted to Russian influences, the historian Radu Rosetti[48] elaborated at great length Bălcescu's views, dissociating them from the retrospective egalitarian utopia of 1848 but maintaining the conception of the primacy of peasant property rights and of peasant

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47 Eugen Demetrescu, *Liberalismul economic în evoluția României moderne*, Bucureşti, n. p., 1940.

48 Radu Rosetti, *Pentru ce s-au răsculat țăranii?*, ed. de Z. Ornea, Bucureşti, Ed. Eminescu, 1987 [1908]; Z. Ornea, *Poporanismul*, Bucureşti, Minerva, 1972.

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gradual enserfment through successive illegitimate boyar encroachments. Unlike Bălcescu, however, he considered the collective village, and not the propertied individual family, as the original Romanian social form.

After getting connected, thus, with the populist Left, Bălcescu's historical utopia came to acquire a right-wing incarnation in the writings of the traditionalist historian Nicolae Iorga. The latter's image of the Romanian medieval world was that of a society composed of free collective villages, contributing with their manpower to the military might of centralized and effective monarchical states. Again, feudalism appears as remarkable for its absence, as the original boyardom was an administrative class subservient to the princes and devoid of autonomous political power. Such arrangements could exist due to the limited interference of the states with the life of the peasant world and the local communities.[49] Peasant decline, accordingly, was to come not as a result of feudal expansion, but due to the rise of the expanded modern state, prone to exercise a tighter control over social life and developed, on Romanian lands, starting with the end of the XVIth century and in connection with Ottoman domination. Increasingly charged with fiscal responsibilities and expanding its power accordingly, the boyardom was redefined as a landholding class, encroaching upon peasant freedoms and properties.[50] Although the ideological dimension of Iorga's historical vision of the Middle Ages is not made explicit in the writings with this content, it emerges from his many pieces of universal history and political thinking, that compare negatively modern freedom or democracy – developing hand in hand with administrative centralization and the suppression of local institutions of self-government – to

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49 Nicolae Iorga, *Studii asupra Evului Mediu românesc*, ed. de Şerban Papacostea, Bucureşti, Ed. Ştiințifică şi Enciclopedică, 1984.

50 Şerban Papacostea, "Nicolae Iorga şi Evul Mediu românesc", in Iorga, *Studii asupra Evului Mediu românesc*, pp. 402-428.

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ancient and particularly medieval freedom and democracy, developed organically in the orbit of small communities.[51] This is how, intended by Bălcescu as an article of modernizing and democratic creed, the fortyeighter historical sociology came to be appropriated by a vision that considered the survivals of medievalism as an antidote to the totalitarian drive of modern political life.[52]

By contrast, the last embodiment so far of the same social historical view is anything but retrogressively utopian. Fashioned by the historical sociologist Henri H. Stahl under communism[53] – but originated in the 1930's – , it stays as part of his sustained effort to consistently and genuinely interpret national and regional past in the Marxist theoretical framework, against the dominant historiography rejected by the author for invoking Marxism only as a matter of ideological convenience.[54] Stahl's vision, that appears, in fact, as a remarkable achievement of non-conventional thinking under harsh conditions of political control, concurs with Iorga's in maintaining that medieval society was composed overwhelmingly of free village communities. This was not, however, a manifestation of social harmony under the aegis of an organic conception of freedom, but a result of the fact that the Romanian states functioned as social and institutional inheritors of the Asiatic empires of the steppes, that had developed, in their turn, a particular variant of the "tributary mode of

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51 Nicolae Iorga, *Evoluția ideii de libertate*, ed. de Ilie Bădescu, Bucureşti, Meridiane, 1987 [1928]; Idem, *Originea şi sensul democrației*, Vălenii de Munte, Datina Românească, n. d. [1930]; Idem, *Idei asupra problemelor actuale*, Bucureşti, Cugetarea, n. d. [1934].

52 Idem, *Dezvoltarea imperialismului contemporan*, ed. de Andrei Pippidi, Bucureşti, Albatros, 1997 [1940], p. 72.

53 Henri H. Stahl, *Les anciennes communautés villageoises roumaines*, Bucarest-Paris, Académie Roumaine-Éditions du C. N. R. S., 1969.

54 Idem, *Probleme confuze în istoria socială a României*, Bucureşti, Ed. Academiei Române, 1992.

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production". Extracting their revenues primarily from the taxation of international routes stretching through their territories, and served by a warrior aristocracy sustained by state revenues, such superficial polities allowed a great degree of autonomy to the peasant communities. Feudalism was imposed gradually, around 1600, as a result of fiscal pressures from the part of the Ottoman state, which led to the strengthening of the nobility entrusted with rights of tax collection. The second part of Stahl's argument squares, of course, with the widely shared historical view referring to the imposition of a "second serfdom" in all countries of Eastern Europe, in post-medieval times, under the influence of either Prussian-type commercialization of agriculture or fiscal requirements.[55]

Although well received abroad,[56] Stahl's conception is not standard wisdom in Romania. Having to stress the universal nature of feudalism as a necessary stage of historical evolution, mainstream historiography of the communist times[57] could not agree with the democratic reading of the past advanced by the people of 1848, whom it heavily celebrated otherwise. A part of pre-communist

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55 Gheorghe I. Brătianu, "Şerbia şi regimul fiscal. Încercare de istorie comparată română, slavă şi bizantină", in *Studii bizantine de istorie economică şi socială*, ed. şi trad. de Alexandru-Florin Platon şi Ion Toderaşcu, Iaşi, Polirom, 2003 [1938], pp. 208-226; Ivan T. Berend, "The Historical Evolution of Eastern Europe as a Region", in Ellen Comisso, Laura D'Andrea Tyson, eds., *Power, Purpose and Collective Choice: Economic Strategy in Socialist States*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1986, pp. 153-170.

56 Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State*, pp. 390-392; Daniel Chirot, *Social Change in a Peripheral Society. The Creation of a Balkan Colony*, New York, Academic Press, 1976.

57 V. Costăchel et al., *Viața feudală în Țara Românească şi Moldova*, Bucureşti, Ed. Ştiințifică, 1957; Ovid Sachelarie, Nicolae Stoicescu, coord., *Instituții feudale în țările române. Dicționar*, Bucureşti, Ed. Academiei R. S. R., 1988.

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historiography offered the basic arguments for arguing the primacy of feudalism, seen as either the manifestation of a European-wide phenomenon with some local adjustments,[58] or as a local adaptation of late-Byzantine feudalization, filtered through the social prism of the Second Bulgarian Empire,[59] a vision also developed after 1945.[60] Such historical perspectives elaborated shortly before the installation of communism drew on previous ones, influenced by the ideological debates on the agrarian question and set in direct confrontation with Bălcescu, Rosetti and the like.[61] Interestingly enough, still, the most distant origins of the "feudal" thesis have to be found in the interventions of the boyar (informal) conservative party at the time of the 1848 revolution and the 1864 agrarian reform, and particularly in those of the conservative political leader Barbu Catargiu.[62] While the successive ideological stakes of the discussion have passed away, the Bălcescu-Catargiu duel could still be considered as an open question.[63]

3. Histories of Romanian ideological trends like to structure their subject matter around a liberal-conservative

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58 Petre P. Panaitescu, "Problema originii clasei boiereşti", in *Interpretări româneşti*, ed. de Ştefan S. Gorovei şi Maria Magdalena Székely, Bucureşti, Ed. Enciclopedică, 1994 [1947], pp. 31-64.

59 Gheorghe I. Brătianu, *Sfatul domnesc şi adunarea stărilor în Principatele Române*, ed. de Şerban Papacostea, Bucureşti, Ed. Enciclopedică, 1995 [1976 (1947-1950)], pp. 34-57.

60 Valentin Al. Georgescu, *Bizanţul şi instituţiile româneşti până la mijlocul secolului al XVIII-lea*, Bucureşti, Ed. Academiei R. S. R., 1980.

61 Constantin Giurescu, *Studii de istorie socială*, ed. de Constantin C. Giurescu, Bucureşti, Universul, 1943; I. C. Filitti, *Opere alese*, ed. de Georgeta Penelea, Bucureşti, Ed. Eminescu, 1985.

62 Henri H. Stahl, *Gânditori şi curente de istorie socială românească*, ed de Paul H. Stahl, Bucureşti, Ed. Universităţii din Bucureşti, 2001, pp. 104-110.

63 Florin Constantiniu, *De la Răutu şi Roller la Muşat şi Ardeleanu*, Bucureşti, Ed. Enciclopedică, 2007.

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divide, stretching from the early XIXth century to the interwar period and underlined by a great degree of continuity within each of the two groups.[64] This is misleading, as the ideological topography of the post-1860's decades looks markedly different from the preceding one. It was in the years following the end of the Russian Protectorate in 1856, due to the victory of allied western powers in the Crimean War, that the hitherto oppositional modernizing liberalism of the 1848 era moved, gradually, towards becoming the privileged governmental political force. This transformation, started with the repatriation of exiled revolutionaries and continued with the constitutional constructions of 1858-1866, was completed in 1876, a moment which, following the founding of the Liberal Party in 1875 – through the aggregation of previously amorphous fortyeighter political groups – inaugurated a long liberal tenure lasting until 1888. The party claiming the inheritance of 1848 was to alternate in power, then, with the conservative one – itself organized in 1880 –, but with increasing fortunes. While conservatism virtually disappeared in the 1920's, liberalism got consolidated from the First World War, making governments between 1922 and 1926, and again from 1933 to 1937. Among the political leaders of revolutionary times, Ion C. Brătianu came to put his stamp most characteristically on governmental liberalism, establishing a lasting family control upon its political machinery and economic resources. Once migrating, thus, from the opposition to the sphere of power, liberalism came to be dramatically transformed as a discourse. As expressed primarily in parliamentary speeches and official newspaper articles, the new political rhetoric

[64] Xenopol, *Istoria partidelor politice*; Victoria F. Brown, "The Adaptation of a Western Political Theory in a Peripheral State: The Case of Romanian Liberalism", in Stephen Fischer-Galati, et al., eds. *Romania between East and West*, Boulder, Colo., East European Monographs, 1982, pp. 269-301; Mishkova, "The Interesting Anomaly of Balkan Liberalism".

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dropped out democratic messianism and populist advocacies for universal suffrage, pleading instead the cause of limited franchise and social responsibility, while at the same time abandoning any semblance of socialist tendencies. Having inherited from the previous era the statist and nationalist orientation, it placed it on the better foundation of economic protectionism, voiced in association with Brătianu's party starting with the 1880's.[65]

Most characteristically, though, was the very fact that, much like the conservative discourse acting beforehand as an ideological reinforcement of the existing order dominated by the boyar landholding elite and indicted as such by the fotyeighters, liberal discourse lost ground in the public sphere, after the 1860's, to raising intellectual fashions and ideological trends. First and foremost among them was a rejuvenated intellectual conservatism – loosely associated, initially, with the existing political one – , born in the 1860's in the headquarters of the *Junimea* cultural movement and having as some of its promoters individuals that presented the same biographical profile as the leaders of fortyeightism, namely lesser boyar or non-boyar origins and western education. From the beginning, the young conservatives assumed the social role previously played by the fortyeighters: that of an opposition group criticizing the establishment – increasingly associated with the liberals – in the name of western culture, which they associated primarily with the social science of German organicism and Spencerian evolutionism. Unlike their forerunners in the field of social criticism, they argued not as unqualified enthusiastic westernizers but as reluctant ones, pleading the case of a better readjustment between "forms" and "substance", against the distortions of a society modernized from above, in the absence of corresponding prerequisites. The new critical culture

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65 Costin Murgescu, *Mersul ideilor economice la români*, Bucureşti, Ed. Enciclopedică, vols. I-II, 1987-1990.

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emerged in this way was to evolve in a different way than the fortyeighter one, acting as a welter of ideas about the shortcomings of peripheral modernization which got associated, up to the 1940's, with a variety of ideological trends.

The most conspicuous manifestation of the new cultural polarity – that placed in confrontation a governmental liberalism claiming on its behalf the legacy of 1848 and an oppositional conservatism which could have better claimed the same legacy due to the social function it performed – was the formulation of a new political and historical sociology. Its first influential utterance came in 1876, in a parliamentary speech delivered by Titu Maiorescu, the leader of the young conservatives, on the issue of school reform. Complaining about the social parasitism of university education developed in excess of social demand, Maiorescu moved on to decry the plague of over-bureaucratization. Offered on the benches of the university, he says, "some Latin and Greek and a bit of jurisprudence, such that they cannot possibly survive independently of the state budget", young people are transformed into natural postulants for state sinecures, such that state policies themselves are inescapably pushed towards "the creation of official positions and the inflation of budgetary salaries", being exposed, by the same token, to the "lack of independent activities, the lack of industrialists, leaseholders or property-holders, entrepreneurs and merchants".[66] Employing a quasi-Marxist language when approaching the relationship between infrastructural social and economic forms and the institutional superstructure, the evolutionist conservative discovers that state-led modernization produces a specific social differentiation, the declining boyardom being gradually replaced not by an industrial and commercial bourgeoisie, but by a middle class of state officials. As for Bălcescu, before him, the lot of

[66] Titu Maiorescu, *Discursuri parlamentare*, ed. de Constantin Schifirneț, Bucureşti, Albatros, vol. 1, 2001 [1897], p. 245.

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the peasant masses is, for Maiorescu, indicative for the structural ills of Romanian society. Unlike the democrat prophet, however, he blames peasant misery not on boyar greed, but on fiscal pressures meant to satisfy bureaucratic material needs.

Maiorescu's sociological intuition was to be broadened by social critics of various stripes. The satirical playwright indebted to young conservative ideology I. L. Caragiale took several inroads into the field of social theory in order to discover that Romania suffered from the reversal of developmental sequences, with state building coming in advance of social differentiation.[67] The great landholder P. P. Carp, emerged as a political leader of the same intellectual group, depicted local society as "a budgetary democracy",[68] while his associate Theodor Rosetti contributed to the growing vision about the distortions of emulative modernization with a genetic theory, explaining that bureaucratic profligacy resulted from the incongruence between lifestyles and consumer behaviors of western provenance and limited economic resources.[69] The traditionalist Mihai Eminescu added to the sociology of the bureaucratic elite a flavor of xenophobia, presenting the parasitic state class as a social cluster of foreign origin and of various ethnicities, spread over the body of indigenous Romanian peasantry from

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67 I. L. Caragiale, "Politică şi cultură" [1896], in *Publicistică şi corespondență*, ed. de Marcel Duță, Bucureşti, Grai şi Suflet, 1999, pp. 98-104.

68 Eugen Lovinescu, *Istoria civilizației române moderne*, ed. de Z. Ornea, Bucureşti, Minerva, vol. 2: *Forțele reacționare*, 1992 [1926], p. 96. See also P. P. Carp, *Discursuri parlamentare*, ed. de Marcel Duță, Bucureşti, Grai şi Suflet, 2000.

69 Theodor Rosetti, "Despre direcțiunea progresului nostru" [1874], in Eugen Lovinescu, coord., *Antologia ideologiei junimiste*, Bucureşti, Casa Şcoalelor, 1942, pp. 117-162.

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neighboring countries,[70] while his disciple, the anti-Semitic theorist A. C. Cuza, adopted the same ideas as part of his racist conception.[71] The agrarian populist Constantin Stere denounced the unceasing combat "for a piece of budgetary cheese", coupled with the political class' subservience to foreign interests.[72] Following the turn of the century, the second generation young conservative Constantin Rădulescu-Motru, stepped in German social psychology, integrated social and cultural criticism into his theory about the monstrosities of non-authentic modernity, concurring with Stere in presenting the peripheral political industry as playing at the hands of foreign domination, as part of the syndrome of economic colonialism.[73] At the same period, the socialist dissenters converted to free trade liberalism H. Sanielevici and Ştefan Antim underscored the connection between the exploitation of society to the benefit of the bureaucracy and the protectionist economic policies embraced by the Liberal Party.[74]

The mounting criticism against the state bureaucratic oligarchy – as different from the landholding oligarchy inherited from pre-modern times and entrenched by the arrangements of commercial agriculture in the 1830's – had counterparts in countries like Serbia or Bulgaria,[75] whose

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70 Mihai Eminescu, *Opere politice*, Iaşi, Ed. Timpul, vol. 2, 1998; Dumitru Murăraşu, *Naţionalismul lui Eminescu*, ed. de Oliviu Tocaciu, Bucureşti, Pacifica, 1994 [1932].

71 A. C. Cuza, *Ţăranii şi clasele dirigente*, Iaşi, n. p., 1895.

72 C. Stere, "Din notiţele unui observator ipocondric (un foileton social)" [1893], in *Scrieri politice şi filozofice*, ed. de Victor Rizescu, Bucureşti, Dominor, 2005, pp. 129-167.

73 Constantin Rădulescu-Motru, "Cultura română şi politicianismul" [1904], in *Personalismul energetic şi alte scrieri*, ed. de Gh. Al. Cazan, Bucureşti, Ed. Eminescu, 1984, pp. 1-104.

74 H. Sanielevici, *Încercări critice*, Bucureşti, Carol Göbl, 1903; Ştefan Antim, *Chestiunea socială în România*, Bucureşti, Imprimeria "La Roumanie", 1908.

75 Richard J. Crampton, *Bulgaria, 1878-1918. A History*, Boulder, Colo., East European Monographs, 1983; Gale Stokes, *Politics*

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conditions of social vacuum, left behind by the retreat of the Ottoman state and nobility,[76] made even greater room for the widespread social perception of the category of state officials as an exploitative class. The Romanian sociology of the bureaucracy as a social class of its own, different from both the declining boyardom and an emerging bourgeoisie suffering from chronic economic and political impotence, was further expanded in the theoretical framework of Marxism. In its most elaborate formulations, it features as a local product of the widespread efforts to make the theory of scientific socialism to resonate with conditions of agrarian backwardness and delayed development. First in line among such Romanian theoretical endeavors was that of Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea, which originally placed its emphasis – in the same manner as in the later theorizing on "peripheral modes of production"[77] – on understanding the agrarian economy of "neoserfdom", as a combination of feudal and bourgeois elements hindering the full development of capitalism and, hence, the country's advance towards socialism.[78] A chapter of Gherea's main book of 1910, devoted to the topic, makes some hints, however, to a social phenomenon with no established Marxist sociological label: "the state administration has started to use its great power to its own betterment, to emancipate itself and transform itself into a parasitic social category, practicing social exploitation on its own counts, […] transforming itself into a new class, a rival of the dominant [landholding] one".[79]

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as Development. The Emergence of Political Parties in Nineteenth Century Serbia, Durham, Duke University Press, 1990.

76 Stokes, "The Social Origins of East European Politics".

77 Charles K. Wilber, Kenneth P. Jameson, eds., *The Political Economy of Development and Underdevelopment*, fifth. ed., New York, McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1994.

78 Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea, *Neioiobăgia*, in *Opere complete*, ed. de Ion Popescu-Puțuri et al., Bucureşti, Ed. Politică, vol. 4, 1977.

79 *Ibid.*, pp. 128-129.

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Several posthumous articles published in 1920 and 1930, and intended as drafts of a comprehensive book on the nature of Romania's social conditions, rounded up his theory of the "oligarchy" as a non-feudal and yet non-capitalist class. This social class, Gherea now makes clear, "is not the representative of some definite economic interests, but instead, as a genuine oligarchy, it acts to the interest of a *sui generis* industry, namely the political industry".[80]

In the Romanian interwar ideological milieu, Marxism could be further invoked and interpreted, in turn, for legitimizing the bureaucratic oligarchy as a necessary endowment of accelerated modernization; for reasserting it, again, in the fashion of Gherea, as a hinder to capitalist development; and, finally, for denying the meaning of the notion and rejecting it as an ideological construct meant to legitimate the treason of Marxist ideals. Moreover, the debate put into question not only the issue of social structure and the existence of a bureaucratic class, but also the underlying conception of a diversity of modernizing paths.

The first two of the ideological instrumentalizations and sociological interpretations of Marxism featured in the 1920's, being represented, on the one side, by the "legal Marxist" Ştefan Zeletin – dubbed by his adversaries as an "oligarchic Marxist" and pleading the cause of the liberal-dominated political and modernizing establishment – and, on the other side, by the social democrats Lotar Rădăceanu and Şerban Voinea. Writing as a theorist of unilinear development – six decades after Maiorescu had launched the opposite, multilinear conception about modernization – Zeletin acknowledged the state oligarchy as an integral part of the local social landscape, in order to extol its positive modernizing function, as a XIXth century peripheral embodiment of the political arrangements of European monarchical

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[80] Idem, "[Despre oligarhia română]" [1914, 1920, 1930], în *Opere complete*, ed. de Ion Popescu-Puțuri et al., Bucureşti, Ed. Politică, vol. 5, 1978, pp. 176-231.

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absolutism and meant, as the latter ones, to watch over the growth of an infant capitalist economy passing through the stage of mercantilism. Having performed its role of inducing economic development and social change through state mechanisms, the oligarchy was being gradually replaced, after the First World War, by a capitalist financial elite emerged from within it and in charge of a monopolist economy that Zeletin, following Rudolf Hilferding, took as a world predicament of the time.[81] The disciples of Gherea, in their turn, denied the meaning of Zeletin's historical sociology to the root, arguing that Romania's external involvement in the world capitalist market, as an exporter of primary products, had not led to the refashioning of internal social arrangements on the capitalist pattern, but on the contrary, had produced the interconnected phenomena of a neo-feudal agrarian society and a bureaucratized middle class with no authentic capitalist vocation.[82] Moving farther than Gherea, they advocated a sustained alliance between the working class, together with its socialist vanguard, and the still feeble but yet expanding economic bourgeoisie, against the oligarchy whose main objective was "to paralyze capitalist progress"[83] and turn it to its sole benefit.

Besides Zeletin's, the only other sociology of modernization of the unilinear stripe produced in pre-communist Romania was formulated under the inspiration of communist Marxism, and was to place a heavy burden upon the following evolution of the discipline, or, much rather, upon its gradual

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81 Ştefan Zeletin, *Burghezia română. Originea şi rolul său istoric*, ed. de C. D. Zeletin, Bucureşti, Humanitas, 1991 [1925], pp. 178-191.

82 Lotar Rădăceanu, "Oligarhia română", in *Arhiva pentru ştiinţă şi reformă socială* 5: 3-4, 1924, pp. 497-532; 6: 1-2, 1926, pp. 160-184; 6: 3-4, 1927, pp. 435-459; Şerban Voinea, *Marxism oligarhic. Contribuţie la problema dezvoltării capitaliste a României*, Bucureşti, Brănişteanu, 1926.

83 Rădăceanu, "Oligarhia română", in *Arhiva pentru ştiinţă şi reformă socială* 6: 3-4, 1927, p. 441.

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reemergence after a temporary collapse. In a series of works conceived in the 1930's, but published after the Soviet military occupation of 1944, the social theorist Lucreţiu Pătrăşcanu defined his ideological identity towards his social-democratic rivals by reference to their two most conspicuous sociological innovations: the conception of a neo-feudal mode of production and that of a bureaucratic class, posited as proofs of Romania's temporary departure from the western, capitalist path of development. Asserting that social evolution could only take place through the juxtaposition between a declining feudal social segment and a rising capitalist one, he rejected the idea of the state oligarchy as a theoretical artifice advanced by the socialists in order to offer justifications for their alliance with bourgeois interests .[84]

Pătrăşcanu's rigid interpretation of Marxist historical sociology was to be simplified further in the subsequent decades. Still, Gherea's analysis of neoserfdom was to be recovered by Henri H. Stahl, as part of his overall endeavor in favor of a genuine, flexible and innovative use of Marxist categories,[85] and even poured by the same author into the international debates on non-capitalist modes of production.[86] The intellectual history of the last decades of communism concurred in this revaluation of Gherea's wisdom,[87] although those versions of it that did not subscribe to the nationalist orientation of Ceauşescu's regime tended – somehow self-contradictory – to place a general negative assessment upon

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84 Lucreţiu Pătrăşcanu, *Problemele de bază ale României*, Bucureşti, Socec & Co, 1944, pp. 257-258 ; Idem, *Un veac de frământări sociale, 1821-1907*, Bucureşti, Ed. Politică, 1969 [1945].

85 Stahl, *Les anciennes communautés villageoises roumaines*.

86 Idem, "Théories de C. Dobrogeanu Gherea sur les lois de la penetration du capitalisme dans les pays retardaires", în *Review* (of the "Fernand Braudel Center") 2: 1, 1978, pp. 101-114.

87 Z. Ornea, *Opera lui C. Dobrogeanu-Gherea*, Bucureşti, Cartea Românească, 1983.

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the larger vision of "forms without substance", to which Gherea's views also belonged, presenting it as a vehicle of political reaction.[88] The tricky sociological conception of the bureaucratic class was to have a much worse fate. The evaluations produced within the field of intellectual history denounced Maiorescu's complaints about the inflation of budgetary offices, to the detriment of productive abilities, as an attempt "to substitute a preconceived schema of conservative provenance to social reality".[89] Mainstream sociology simply repeated Pătrăşcanu's considerations,[90] while the half-dissident Stahl shows to be remarkably conformist on this topic. He notes in passing, thus, that Rădulescu-Motru "is interesting, among other things, because he anticipates the theory of the 'oligarchy', that Gherea and his disciples would also speak about, distinguishing it from the bourgeois class. This is a feeble theory, which was to have some other occurrences".[91] As for Zeletin, he borrows from Gherea the theory of the oligarchy, such that "is funny to see how the two rivals agree precisely upon the weakest part of their views".[92] Still more telling is a pronouncement of the same brilliant author in an interview he gave in the 1980's, with few prospects for publication at the time. Here, he vaguely recalls the conversation with "an American scholar", who was saying that the Romanians were not conscious of Rădulescu-Motru's originality, when theorizing the social profile of the oligarchic politician "as a person who has no other profession but to act as a kind of intermediary between the political life and the masses… Well, it is hard to

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88 Idem, *Junimea şi junimismul*; Idem, *Tradiționalism şi modernitate în deceniul al treilea*, Bucureşti, Ed. Eminescu, 1980.

89 Idem, *Junimea şi junimismul*, p. 197.

90 Ernö Gall, *Sociologia burghezã din România. Studii critice*, ed. a II-a, Bucureşti, Ed. Politică, 1963.

91 Stahl, *Gânditori şi curente*, p. 135.

92 *Ibid.*, pp. 232-233.

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find the appropriate term".[93] Here we have a dramatic testimony for the force by which oblivion can hit the collective memory of a cultural community: an idea that, at the beginning of the XXth century, was shared by social analysts otherwise ideologically opposed on many other questions, and acted as a common denominator for the various critiques of local social arrangements, can only be recovered by the means of an exercise in the archeology of ideas.

Stahl was right in his recollections. At the time Rădulescu-Motru, Gherea, Zeletin and Rădăceanu argued about oligarchic bureaucratization as a symptom of the distortions of capitalism in the setting of delayed modernization, the major European schools of sociology did not offer a statement of the sort. Weber fears, it is true, over-bureaucratization, but conceives of it as coming from the internal dynamics of rationalization set in motion at the beginning of modernization, and as such taking place against the background of consummate capitalist development.[94] As a proof, he does not approach East European realities from this perspective.[95] The school of Mosca, Pareto and Michels, otherwise, perceived the modern oligarchic tendencies as part and parcel of the dynamics of democracy, stating that "the principal cause of oligarchy in the democratic parties is to be found in the technical indispensability of leadership".[96] The Romanian theorists, by contrasts, formulated their indictments against the pseudo-capitalist and bureaucratic elite while agreeing that this one belonged together with an incipient and insufficient democratization. As for assessing the present relevance of the Romanian dilemmas about the

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93 Zoltán Rostás, *Monografia ca utopie. Interviuri cu Henri H. Stahl*, Bucureşti, Paideia, 2000, p. 151.

94 *From Max Weber*, loc cit.

95 Richard Pipes, "Max Weber and Russia", in *World Politics* 7: 3, 1955, pp. 371-401.

96 Robert Michels, *Political Parties*, transl. by Eden and Cedar Paul, New York, The Free Press, 1968 [1962], p. 364.

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ills of state-led attempts at capitalist modernization, it suffices to invoke the post-communist dilemmas about the feasibility of the capitalist project in a setting defined, once again, by the absence of an entrepreneurial bourgeois class. Those who argue optimistically that capitalism – of the managerial kind – can be built "without capitalists"[97] make their case by appropriating a historical interpretation of the bourgeois-capitalist development in Central and Eastern Europe based on a wider understanding of the bourgeois middle class, that places a heavy emphasis on the successful modernizing performances of its white-collar, non-entrepreneurial segment.[98] It is telling, in this connection, that the interwar Romanian corporatist theorist Mihail Manoilescu, driven by the ideological stance he adopted to argue the feasibility of bourgeois survival after the decline of liberalism and capitalism, felt the need to make his case by the means of a piece of historical sociology based on the same broadening of the bourgeoisie's definition as a class.[99]

Definitely, as Albert Hirschman once said, all that we can expect from intellectual history is "not to resolve issues, but to raise the level of the debate".[100] The fragment of intellectual history here approached with the hindsight provided of Andrew Janos' works cannot hope for a better fate.

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97 Gil Eyal, Iván Szeléni, Eleanor Townsley, *Making Capitalism without Capitalists. The New Ruling Elites in Eastern Europe*, London, Verso, 2001.

98 Jürgen Kocka, "The Middle Classes in Europe", in *The Journal of Modern History* 67: 4, 1995, pp. 783-806.

99 Mihail Manoilescu, *Rostul şi destinul burgheziei româneşti*, ed. de Leonard Oprea, Bucureşti, Athena, 1997 [1943].

100 Albert O. Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1977, p. 135.

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Part III

IDEOLOGICAL PATTERNS AND CANONICAL HISTORIES

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5. Subverting the Canon: Oligarchic Politics and Modernizing Optimism in Pre-communist Romania

Literary scholars in Romania have often addressed critically the canon of their field, intent on disclosing the patterns of canonization operating at various junctures in its development. The related domain of the history of political and social ideas has never constituted a focus for deconstructionist efforts of the kind. The article is an attempt to break the ground in this respect. It circumscribes a canon of ideological rightness that structures – to a very large extent without an accurate self-awareness – the specialized scholarship, while also having a significant impact much beyond it, into the entire welter of neighboring

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disciplines and broad cultural discourses. The interwar advocacy advanced by Ştefan Zeletin and Eugen Lovinescu in favor of modernization on the western model, in defense of dominant liberal policies harnessed to the same modernizing project and against the ideological expressions of traditionalist skepticism towards the later is identified as the main object of the mainstream interpretation thus delineated. In their turn, the interpretive views proposed by Z. Ornea from the 1960's to the 1990's are correspondingly underscored as most instrumental in creating the canon of the history of Romanian ideological dynamics. Praising the two pre-communist social and political writers as heroic and effective defenders of Enlightenment rationality against the assault of obscurantist anti-modern ideas – directly connected with interwar fascism but also insidiously appropriated on its behalf, later on, by the nationalist-communist rhetoric –, Ornea failed to offer a perceptive characterization of the same classics as defenders of oligarchic politics issuing from the adjustments suffered by western liberalism in the local setting, in order to suit the requirements of peripheral modernization. Once understanding, against the canon, the true nature of Zeletin's and Lovinescu's political thinking, we can take a critical departure from the legitimating historical accounts of the process of modernization they offered, and at the same time identify some other – hitherto neglected, but highly relevant – Romanian ideological stances pertaining to the family of intellectual liberalism.

1. Can one indicate precisely the moment when the figures of the literary critic Eugen Lovinescu and of the social analyst Ştefan Zeletin were established, in Romanian scholarship, as the quintessential examples of ideological "rightness" and intellectual honorability? A positive answer to this question could alter our general understanding of the pre-communist intellectual heritage of Romania.

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As for Lovinescu, his disciples in the field of literary criticism were already numerous at the end of the pre-communist period,[1] and they did not avoid to pay homage to the person who had waged, from the first decade of the XXth century up to the 1940's, long intellectual wars against nostalgic traditionalism, and who most energetically claimed a literature with "urban" overtones and a "modernist" orientation, resonating with – and openly displaying its inspiration from – the most novel European trends of artistic experimentation. Still, Lovinescu's accomplishments in the related field of social and political thinking were by far not as widely acclaimed at the time. When his most important work of this kind was published, in 1924-1926, it raised bitter criticisms from various ideological[2] camps. Presented as a sociological interpretation of the process of Romanian modernization since the beginning of the XIXth century, the impressive three-volumes *History of Modern Romanian*

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1 An early work witnessing this influence: Şerban Cioculescu, Vladimir Streinu, Tudor Vianu, *Istoria literaturii române moderne*, Bucureşti, Eminescu, 1985 [1943]. The range of the same influence is also displayed in Iordan Chimet, coord., *Dreptul la memorie*, Cluj-Napoca, Dacia, vols. 1-4, 1992-1993.

2 The notion of "ideology" is notoriously ambiguous. It is employed with a restrictive meaning from two perspectives: the Marxist and the conservative ones. See, for example, Jorge Larrain, "Ideology", in Tom Bottomore et al., eds., *A Dictionary of Marxist Thought*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1983, pp. 219-223, respectively Kenneth Minogue, *Alien Powers: the Pure Theory of Ideology*, London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1985. I use it here with a broad meaning, resting on the basic idea that "political life itself sets the main problems for the political theorist, causing a certain range of issues to appear problematic, and a corresponding range of questions to become the leading subjects of debate", with the qualification that "this is no [...], however, [to] treat these ideological superstructures as a straightforward outcome of their social base": see Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, vol. 1: *The Renaissance*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1978, p. XI.

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Civilization[3] was most often accused – by both professional and self-styled sociologists – for sociological amateurism and naïveté, as well as for arbitrary intellectual syncretism and emphatic juxtaposition of theories, ideas and schools of thought.[4] Lovinescu's rejoinders on this side were never conclusive, and the "hard" social thinkers of the age accordingly never accepted him as a fellow member of the profession or as a significant voice in the discipline.[5]

Outside this narrower circle, among the various authors who engaged in the ideological debates of the time, Lovinescu's ideas did not score much better either. The few works with a wider historical and comparative coverage published short before the installation of communism that claimed – more often than not undeservedly – the status of unbiased researches into the history of Romanian social and political ideas did indeed treat him as a significant representative of one major ideological orientation: together with Zeletin, Lovinescu was already seen as the thinker who had given the most vocal and efficient argumentation for modernization on the western model.[6] However, this very last intellectual attitude was either presented, in the same works, as a choice with no special claims to validity over the

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3 Eugen Lovinescu, *Istoria civilizației române moderne*, ed. de Z. Ornea, Bucureşti, Minerva, vols. 1-3, 1992 [1924-1926].

4 The best testimony of this are Lovinescu's own responses to such criticisms, see Lovinescu, *Istoria civilizației*, vol 3: *Legile formației civilizației române*, pp. 7-34, 46-54.

5 Many years afterwards, in the communist period, the most important survivor of the interwar sociological school could still not hide his contempt for Lovinescu's dilettantism: see Henri H. Stahl, *Gânditori şi curente de istorie socială românească*, ed. de Paul H. Stahl, Bucureşti, Ed. Universității din Bucureşti, 2001, pp. 217-218.

6 Traian Herseni, *Sociologia românească. Încercare istorică*, Bucureşti, Institutul de Ştiințe Sociale al României, 1940; Ion Zamfirescu, *Spiritualități româneşti*, ed. de Marin Diaconu, Bucureşti, Vivaldi, 2001 [1941].

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rival views of national social, cultural and political evolution, or dismissed from the standpoint of an indigenist or third-way conception of development.[7]

Given the internal and international political constellation of the time, it is understandable that Lovinescu's advocacy of westernization, associated as it was with his avowed appreciation for "old-fashioned" liberal democracy, did not manage to attract in those years a large audience, and neither enthusiastic approvals from fellow social and political writers. Romania was not an exception in the general (Central and East) European drive to radical Right political solutions, of which radical nationalist rhetoric was a natural ingredient.[8] When communism was installed, the political culture of the Right was reigning supreme in Romania. There was no time for the alternative discourses to recover, before any kind of free intellectual debate was interdicted. With a host of followers in literature and literary criticism that managed to maintain his influence alive even during the decades when his name and works could not be openly invoked or cited – or had to be used with extensive precaution – , Eugen Lovinescu was "rediscovered", together with a large part of the pre-communist national cultural heritage, in the period of the (relative) "liberalization" of the

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7 For a recent interesting restatement of the desirability of western-type modernization against the various schools of cultural relativism, by direct reference to Eastern Europe, see Daniel Chirot, "Returning to Reality: Culture, Modernization, and Various Eastern Europes. Why Functionalist-Evolutionary Theory Works" in Tr@nsit-Virtuelles Forum 21, 2002, pp. 1-13. See also Ernest Gellner, *Postmodernism, Reason and Religion*, London, Routledge, 1992.

8 Ivan Berend, *The Crisis Zone of Europe*, transl. by Adrienne Makkay-Chambers, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1986; Andrew C. Janos, *East Central Europe in the Modern World. The Politics of the Borderlands from Pre- to Post-communism*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2000, pp. 166-217.

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regime, starting with the mid 1960's.[9] For obvious reasons, his social-political output – which contained polemical references to the doctrines of historical materialism – was recovered more reluctantly than the literary one. Still, this partial recovery was enough for starting to transform Lovinescu into a genuine classic of Romanian political thinking.

The posthumous career of Zeletin's ideas was a bit different. Unlike Lovinescu, Zeletin was accepted, in the interwar period, as an original and provocative (however mistaken) social thinker, whose intellectual constructs – advanced in his two works *The Romanian Bourgeoisie* (1925) and *Neoliberalism* (1927)[10] – had to be taken seriously and deserved to receive careful responses. Although trained as a philosopher, his credentials as a social analyst were not generally denied, and authors much better placed institutionally within the (emerging) discipline took pains to give detailed commentaries of his interventions.[11] As his political ideas resonated much better than Lovinescu's with the right-wing culture of the late thirties and of the forties, Zeletin was even occasionally eulogized as a giant of

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9 A work that contributed significantly to this recovery: Ileana Vrancea, *Confruntări în critica deceniilor IV-VII. E. Lovinescu şi posteritatea lui critică*, Bucureşti, Cartea Românească, 1975.

10 Ştefan Zeletin, *Burghezia română. Originea şi rolul său istoric*, ed. de C. D. Zeletin, Bucureşti, Humanitas, 1991 [1925]; Idem, *Neoliberalismul*, ed. de C. D. Zeletin, Bucureşti, Scripta, 1992 [1927].

11 The most important such polemical reactions came from the part of the socialist and peasantist theorists. See Lotar Rădăceanu, "Oligarhia română", in *Arhiva pentru ştiinţă şi reformă socială* 5: 3-4, 1924, pp. 497-532; 6: 1-2, 1926, pp. 160-184; 6: 3-4, 1927, pp. 435-459; Şerban Voinea, *Marxism oligarhic. Contribuţie la problema dezvoltării capitaliste a României*, Bucureşti, Ed. Brănişteanu, 1926; Gheorghe Zane, "Burghezia română şi marxismul", in *Viaţa românească* 19: 2, 1927, pp. 244-260; 19: 3, 1927, pp. 323-334; Virgil Madgearu, *Agrarianism, capitalism, imperialism*, ed. de Ludovic Bathory, Cluj-Napoca, Dacia, 1999 [1936].

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Romanian social thinking.[12] His professed disciples in the field were not, however, as numerous as the literary figures who closely followed Lovinescu. Then, in the first decades of communism, Zeletin – a much more resolute defender than Lovinescu of the social and economic arrangements of "bourgeois" Romania – was energetically criticized as a philosopher of plutocracy.[13] The beginning of his recovery was due to the gradual process of reinserting the nationalist dimension into historiography:[14] praising the *status quo* of the capitalist society, Zeletin nevertheless presented a positive view of the pre-communist modernization story. His strivings to de-dramatize the history of the XIXth century, and to present it as a success story, fit well with the widespread ideological strategy of the time which consisted in fusing the tenets of the nationalist and Marxist historical views, by presenting the advent of the socialist society as the fulfillment of the entire record of a centuries-long heroic past – across which the internal emancipation of the socially exploited classes went hand in hand with the struggles of the entire nation against encroachments by foreign powers. In the end, Zeletin joined Lovinescu as a classic of the most "valid" brand of social-political thinking produced in Romania before 1945.[15]

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12 Valeriu D. Bădiceanu, *Ştefan Zeletin, doctrinar al burheziei româneşti*, Bucureşti, n. p., 1943.

13 Characteristic for this condemnation is Ernö Gall, *Sociologia burgheză din România. Studii critice*, ed. a II-a, Bucureşti, Ed. Politică, 1963. See also Miron Constantinescu, Ovidiu Bădina, Ernö Gall, *Sociological Thought in Romania*, transl. by Silviu Brucan, Bucharest, Meridiane, 1974.

14 For these transformations of the Romanian historiography see Vlad Georgescu, *Politică şi istorie: cazul comuniştilor români 1944-1977*, ed. de Radu Popa, Bucureşti, Humanitas, 1991; Lucian Boia, *Istorie şi mit în conştiinţa românească*, Bucureşti, Humanitas, 1997; Florin Constantiniu, *De la Răutu şi Roller la Muuşat şi Ardeleanu*, Bucureşti, Ed. Enciclopedică, 2007.

15 The best expression of this consecration of the two figures as classics of social-political thinking is Z. Ornea, *Tradiţionalism şi*

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It might seem paradoxical that the scholarship produced in the communist period managed to do for Zeletin and Lovinescu, the two pre-communist "official" defenders of capitalist modernization, precisely what the pre-communist scholarship never did in a determined fashion: namely, to elevate them to the status of classics. This revaluation of the two intellectual figures derived in a natural way, however, from the more general structure of the interpretations provided by the scholarship in question.

2. As emerged during the communist years, the dominant way of presenting the pre-communist period in the history of ideological trends in Romania consisted in placing them along an axis whose ends were defined by different pairs of terms whose classificatory meaning was virtually the same. "Modernism" was opposed to "traditionalism", in the same way as "progressive" thinking stood in opposition to the "reactionary" one, and "rationalist" tendencies were contrasted to the "irrationalist" philosophical views. The classical dichotomy between Left and Right was superimposed upon these couples of opposite notions. Thinkers who gravitated towards the first of the two poles – that of the Left, of rationalism and progressivism – were supporters of industrialization and defended forms of cultural expression with an "urban" resonance. Those who stood closer to the other pole – that of the Right, of irrationalism and of reaction – promoted a view of economic development based

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modernitate în deceniul al treilea, Bucureşti, Ed. Eminescu, 1980. Also characteristic for the canon invoked: Constantin Ciopraga, *Literatura română dintre 1900 şi 1918*, Iaşi, Junimea, 1970; Ov. S. Chohmălniceanu, *Literatura română între cele două războaie mondiale*, Bucureşti, Minerva, vols. 1-3., 1972-1975; Dumitru Micu, *Gândirea şi gândirismul*, Bucureşti, Minerva, 1975. A recent restatement of the same stance: Bogdan Murgescu, "Introduction", in Bogdan Murgescu, ed., *Romania and Europe. Modernization as Temptation, Modernization as Threat*, Bucharest, ALLFA & Edition Körber Stiftung, 2000, pp. 1-12.

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on agriculture, being at the same time vocal admirers of the cultural universe of the village.

The way the positions along the ideological axis were distributed among authors and intellectual currents is not difficult to guess. There could be no doubt, before 1989, which thinkers and ideological tendencies embodied best the ideas and values associated with left-wing progressiveness: they were the Marxists, and among them, of course, especially the communists. Extreme right-wing reaction was incarnated by the obscurantist defenders of tradition, who made use of religion and of the mystics of the soil as intellectual materials of their theories. Somewhat more desirable than them were the moderate conservatives, or the *Junimists*: although not enthusiasts of industrial modernization, they were nevertheless content with the parliamentary regime and held reasonable views of cultural and economic development. The place immediately to the Right of the socialists was being contended, however, by two categories of authors. Both the "official" modernists and the populists-peasantists[16] presented good credentials for this position on the hierarchy of ideological tendencies. By comparison to the first group, the populists were more "democratically" inclined, and therefore had better claims to be ascribed a place closer to the Left pole. At the same time, however, they were skeptical about industrialization, and

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16 The term "populism" refers, here, to an ideology of development: see, for example, David Mitrany, *Marx against the Peasant. A Study in Social Dogmatism*, New York, Collier Books, 1961 [1951]; Andrzej Walicki, *The Controversy over Capitalism. Studies in the Social Philosophy of the Russian Populists*, Notre Dame, Ind., The University of Notre Dame Press, 1989 [1969]; It is sometimes used, however, as a synonym for semi-fascism: Joseph Held, ed., *Populism in Eastern Europe. Racism, Nationalism and Society*, Boulder, Colo., East European Monographs, 1996; Ivan Berend, *Decades of Crisis. Central and Eastern Europe before World War II*, Berkeley, The University of California Press, 1998, pp. 76-83.

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cherished the dream of propelling Romania on the path of progress in the framework of an agrarian economy. It was generally accepted, to be sure, that their agrarian views were motivated by purely "pragmatic" considerations, having nothing in common with the "romantic" nostalgia for the village universe characteristic to the traditionalists of the Right. Still, their inability to understand that industrialization was the unavoidable fate of modern societies made of them dubious protagonists of modern public life, and linked them to those trends of thought which were to become most easily associated with fascism and radical Right.

The "modernists" – who spoke in favor of the Liberal Party's strategy of modernization – were identified, in the main, with a liberal political view in the generic sense of the term,[17] being preferred to most of the other contenders of the ideological spectrum, Indeed, while not scoring as well as the Marxists when placed on the modernist/rationalist/ progressive *vs.* traditionalist/irrationalist/reactionary evaluative axis, the two "bourgeois" ideologues Lovinescu and Zeletin nevertheless fell on the good side, when measured with the help of it. They indeed were not militants for social justice –

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[17] For the migration from West to East of liberal ideas and politics and their corresponding adjustments, see Leonard Krieger, *The German Idea of Freedom. History of a Political Tradition*, Boston, Beacon Press, 1957; George Fischer, *Russian Liberalism: from Gentry to Intelligentsia*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1958; Gale Stokes, *Legitimacy through Liberalism: Vladimir Jovanovic and the Transformation of Serbian Politics*, Seattle, The University of Washington Press, 1975; Victoria F. Brown, "The Adaptation of a Western Political Theory in a Peripheral State: The Case of Romanian Liberalism", in Stephen Fischer-Galati, et al., eds., *Romania between East and West*, Boulder, Colo., East European Monographs, 1982, pp. 269-301; Maciej Janowski, *Polish Liberal Thought before 1918*, Budapest, Central European University Press, 2004. See also Douglas Howland, "Translating Liberty in Nineteenth-century Japan", in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 62: 1, 2001, pp. 161-189.

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and neither where they as energetic advocates of extensive democratization as the agrarian populists and the peasantists –, but they reasonably qualified as supporters of the constitutional system and of personal freedom, defending them against the obscurantist forces of the radical Right – comparing well even with the moderate conservatives on the same ground. While not very far, thus, from the Marxists, with respect to their political wisdom, they virtually identified with them with respect to their economic wisdom: supporting industrialization and urbanization, they pleaded for precisely the economic structure that the Marxist theory indicates as the only conceivable basis of progress under the aegis of socialism.

Moreover, the good score obtained by Zeletin and Lovinescu in this confrontation of ideological symbols was also due to a certain disqualifying of the available protagonists. Indeed, neither of the thinkers and ideological currents of the Left – the only significant competitors – was appropriate for a very emphatic consecration as a classic. On the one hand, both the social democrats and the populists exhibited "revisionist" interpretations of Marxism[18] – as seen from the standpoint of the rigid historical materialism of the time – that could be perceived, in the end, as more insidious ideological poisons than the frank bourgeois advocacy of the Liberal apologists. On the other hand, Lucrețiu Pătrăşcanu, the only intellectual representative of the Komintern brand of Marxism in pre-1945 Romania,[19] could never be entirely

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[18] Some attempts to dissociate the original content of Marxism from its later re-elaborations: John Plamenatz, *German Marxism and Russian Communism*, London, Longmans, 1954; Raymond Aron, *Le marxisme de Marx*, ed. par Jean-Claude Casanova and Christian Bachelier, Paris, Éditions de Fallois, 2002.

[19] Lucrețiu Pătrăşcanu, *Problemele de bază ale României*, Bucureşti, Socec & Co., 1944; Idem, *Un veac de frământări sociale, 1821-1907* [1945], Bucureşti, Ed. Politică, 1969; Idem, *Sub trei dictaturi* [1944], Bucureşti, Ed. Politică, 1970.

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appropriated by the regime due to the embarrassing episode of his purging, in the 1950's. There was a void place left, thus, in the very center of the communist ideological pantheon, that the official modernists Lovinescu and Zeletin were called upon to fill.

The kind of scholarship that we referred to above was the soundest produced during the communist period. It was also of the sort whose ideological bent resonates best with our post-communist intellectual concerns related to creating a liberal-democratic order. And this is so because the revaluation of pre-communist modernism during the period of communism responded not only to the need to retrospectively criticize interwar fascism, but also to the (related) need – intensely felt by significant parts of the intellectual opinion of the time – to oppose the perverse discourse of chauvinistic nationalism officially promoted by the regime of Nicolae Ceauşescu.[20] As a response to this pressure, there got constituted, at the time, the intellectual strategy – embraced by a part of the university and publishing establishment – of looking to the pair of interwar "modernists" Lovinescu and Zeletin as to the perfect antidote against the isolationist tendencies recurrent in Romanian culture, and to present them, together with a score of several other figures – of which a large part were disciples of the former – as both the symbols and the fountainhead of all cultural attitudes opposed to isolationism, xenophobia, fear of change and rejection of modernity.

This tendency has only radicalized after 1989. The picture presented above has been altered in the most representative works of intellectual history with a wider coverage produced in the post-communist period by further elevating the "official" modernists to the position of the supreme instances of truth in Romanian culture, this time to the

[20] One of the earliest approaches to the topic: George Schöpflin, "Rumanian Nationalism", in *Survey* 20: 1, 1974, pp. 77-104.

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detriment of their adversaries of both the Right and the Left.[21] Besides, the general tendency now has been to expel from the historical account the left-wing component of the ideological spectrum, as also the social-economic layer of the ideological debate, by concentrating instead on the genealogy of Romanian fascism[22] and on the trends of anti-western nationalism that had been incorporated into the nationalist-communist synthesis and its post-communist avatars.[23]

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21 Most characteristic is Z. Ornea, *Anii treizeci. Extrema dreaptă românească*, Bucureşti, Ed. Fundației Culturale Române, 1995. Other examples: Adrian Marino, *Pentru Europa. Integrarea României. Probleme ideologice şi culturale*, Iaşi, Polirom, 1995; Idem, *Politică şi cultură. Pentru o nouă cultură română*, Iaşi, Polirom, 1996; Leon Volovici, *Ideologia naționalistă şi „problema evreiască". Eseu despre formele antisemitismului intelectual în România anilor '30*, Bucureşti, Humanitas, 1995; Boia, *Istorie şi mit în conştiința românească*; Marta Petreu, *Un trecut deocheat sau "Schimbarea la față a României"*, Cluj-Napoca, Dacia, 1999; Virgil Nemoianu, *România şi liberalismele ei*, Bucureşti, Ed. Fundației Culturale Române, 2000.

22 See the books cited above by Ornea, Volovici, Petreu; See also Sorin Alexandrescu, *Paradoxul român*, Bucureşti, Univers, 1998; Alexandra Laignel-Lavastine, *Filozofie şi naționalism. Paradoxul Noica*, Bucureşti, Humanitas, 1998; George Voicu, *Mitul Nae Ionescu*, Bucureşti, Ars Docendi, 2000; Matei Călinescu, "The 1927 Generation in Romania: Friendships and Ideological Choices (Mihail Sebastian, Mircea Eliade, Nae Ionescu, Eugène Ionesco)", in *East European Politics and Societies* 15: 3, 2001, pp. 649-677.

23 A very consistent approach to the successive transformations of Romanian nationalism, from pre- to post-communism: Katherine Verdery, "National Ideology and National Character in Interwar Romania", in Ivo Banac, Katherine Verdery, eds., *National Character and National Ideology in Interwar Eastern Europe*, New Haven, Yale Center for International and Area Studies, 1995, pp. 103-133; Idem, *National Ideology under Socialism. Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceauşescu's Romania*, Berkeley, The University of California Press, 1991; Idem, "Nationalism and National Sentiment in Post-socialist Romania", in *Slavic Review* 52: 2, 1993, pp. 179-203..

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Of the types of works that contributed to shaping this argumentative structure, by far the most significant were those intended not as historical accounts devoted to various disciplines, but as general – and, as such, by definition "interdiscipinary" – explorations into the development of ideological tendencies and intellectual currents. And of the authors who wrote in this vein, it goes without saying that the hugely prolific Z. Ornea stands out as the most important, due not only to his massive output, but also to the documentary soundness, coherence, clarity and literary value of his works. Trained as a sociologist but cohabitating, for the longest part of his career, with the community of literary historians, this author came closest of all exegetes of Romanian culture to offering a global investigation of the interrelationships between literary, philosophical, sociological and economic ideas that confronted and influenced each other as part of the intellectual debates of the period 1860-1945. His books of synthesis give general presentations of *Junimism*,[24] of the vision of cultural nationalism that developed, before the First World War, around the journal *Sămănătorul*,[25] of the socialist thought of the same period,[26] and of the left-wing agrarian ideology of populism-peasantism.[27] The interwar period – also touched on in the book on peasanism cited above – was approached by him in a somewhat different manner, being treated in two works intended to offer general accounts of the intellectual debates in the 1920's and 1930's, respectively.[28] Besides a large

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[24] Z. Ornea, *Junimea şi junimismul*, Bucureşti, Ed. Eminescu, 1975.

[25] Idem, *Sămănătorismul*, Bucureşti, Ed. Fundației Culturale Române, 1998 [1970].

[26] Idem, *Curentul cultural de la* Contemporanul, Bucureşti, Minerva, 1977; Idem, *Opera lui C. Dobrogeanu-Gherea*, Bucureşti, Cartea Românească,1983.

[27] Idem, *Țărănismul. Studiu sociologic*, Bucureşti, Ed. Politică, 1969; Idem, *Poporanismul*, Bucureşti, Minerva, 1972.

[28] Idem, *Tradiționalism şi modernitate*; Idem, *Anii treizeci*.

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amount of articles compiled in a series of volumes (and of which some were first published as introductory studies to his many editions of classical texts) and several biographical works devoted to the figures of Titu Maiorescu, Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea and Constantin Stere – the founding figures of the *Junimist*, socialist and populist intellectual currents respectively – he approached the social, economical and political ideas of the hardly classifiable thinker Alexandru D. Xenopol.[29]

In order to comprehend how Ornea's ideas – symptomatic, as already said, for a large part of the Romanian scholarship – changed after the demise of communism, a comparison between the two books devoted to the 1920's and 1930's is very enlightening. What it shows is that he did not significantly modify his general framework of interpretation. As expected, the major revisions that appeared referred to the treatment of Marxist thinking: while before 1989 the socialist and communist authors stood as the best incarnation of progressive and "modernist" ideas, with the official "modernists" Zeletin and Lovinescu and the populists/peasantists occupying the position next to the right of them, now Zeletin and Lovinescu started to be celebrated, without any qualifications, as both liberal thinkers and as the only cogent analysts of modernization. In more general terms, while the blame put on the intellectual currents of the reactionary or radical Right was maintained, the left-wing ideas were depreciated – as compared to the previous works –, with a corresponding revaluation of the liberal center. Unfortunately, this re-positioning of cultural symbols was accompanied by a very visible tendency to avoid approaching some topics that would have required extensive interpretative revisions, and thus by dropping out of the historical account large sections

[29] N. Gogoneață, Z. Ornea, *A. D. Xenopol. Concepția socială şi filozofică*, Bucureşti, Ed. Ştiințifică, 1965.

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of the historical record of intellectual history. Indeed, while *Tradiționalism şi modernitate* is broad and ambitious in scope, paying equal attention to social-economic as well as to literary-philosophical debates, and trying to present a complete picture of the intellectual concerns and intellectual trends of the age, *Anii treizeci* is quite narrowly focused on the rise of the "extreme Right" and on the reactions this phenomenon raised among the thinkers of a different orientation. Marxist authors do not feature al all as protagonists of the book, the peasantists are also left aside, social-economic issues are neglected. The general impression one gets, after this comparison, is that Ornea – together with his fellow Romanian researchers – avoided to make the effort to re-comprehend, in post-communist terms, the problems connected with the sociological and economic component of the pre-communist doctrines and ideological currents, as well as to discover a new, post-totalitarian "language", fit for presenting the vagaries of the Romanian Left.

3. To contend the need of revising a cultural canon is certainly a far-reaching and risky enterprise. Yet, the present article advances the claim that such a reconfiguration of the canon described above in broad outline is needed, and derives inescapably from adopting a perspective on the field which yields into disclosing certain elements of it that have constantly been missed from the previous historical pictures. The field of our research is represented by the entire record of thinking on modernization, national identity and political programs voiced in the period comprised between the publication by Titu Maiorescu in 1868 of his seminal article "Against the Present Direction in Romanian Culture"[30] – that inaugurated a new mode of discussing the problem of the adjustment of local society to the embracing

[30] Titu Maiorescu, "În contra direcției de astăzi în cultura română" [1868], in *Critice*, ed. de Domnica Filimon, Bucureşti, Elion, 2000 [1908], pp. 161-170.

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modern civilization – and the last occurrences of free intellectual exchanges before the installation of the official communist discourse in 1947.[31] And the new perspective that we vindicate rests on the demand to highlight a central thread running through all such debates of the time: namely, the ideological struggle waged over the issue of assessing the performances of the political establishment in charge of the modernizing policies.

In other words, we vindicate the need to grasp the interconnection between two types of theorizing that have most often developed hand in hand, but whose histories have tended to be told separately. The first of these intellectual debates was concerned with the character of the Romanian political establishment, and of the society over which it ruled. The second of them was concerned with the relationship between this society and the larger world – or, in other words, the relationship between Romanian society and the modern western civilization. Faced with the challenge of modernization on the western model, Romanian intellectuals debated the prospects of westernization and at the same time assessed the behavior of the modernizing elite. They spoke about the danger that the national culture might be dissolved under the impact of foreign influences, while at the same time blaming the ruling strata for the wrong way the process of cultural importations was being conducted. They discussed about the effects that the spread of western capitalist market had on local peasant economy, criticizing the indigenous economic elite for its role as an agent of global capitalism. They despaired over the bad prospects of development of the national industry, condemning the dominant classes for their wrong approach to the objective of industrialization. We claim that, in order to be more historically sensitive, our historical account has

[31] We can indicate the books by Pătrăşcanu cited above as marking the end of the pre-communist debate on modernization.

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to take as the main target the connection between the narrower critique of the elite and the larger topics of social and cultural criticism, those concerned with the adjustment or a backward society to the modern world.

To be sure, several more "specialized" debates were involved in this ideological conversation. Genuine or self-styled experts made technical analyses and offered technical solutions for the problems of industry or agriculture. Constitutional jurists studied the functioning of institutions and the legal system. The specialists of the field, and virtually everybody besides them, debated the right balance that had to be observed, in literature and art, between foreign fashions and national traditions. There is no question to follow all these debates in detail. Instead, our focus is placed, first, on those authors, texts and intellectual currents that display a general characterization of the political system, in terms of its peculiarities by comparison to the developed countries of the West – which were taken, by the theorists in question, as a model of "normal" development; and, second, on the most general conceptions regarding the issue of national identity and the patterns of social-economic development. We intend to set the debate about the ruling "oligarchy" against the background of the larger debate about modernization and models of development. Or, in other words, we take a new look at the debate about Romanian developmental peculiarities, by focusing on the narrower debate about who was responsible – and to what extent – for all the deplorable features of "peripheral" development.

The conversation reconstructed in this way is interesting not only for the historian of the process of modernization, but also from the standpoint of a more "regular" political history of Romania. Besides their (relative) intellectual sophistication, the topics involved in it were the ones most hotly and intensely debated in the country during that period of time, constituting the privileged ideological

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references for parties and political groups, and marking the dividing lines between contending political factions. Romanian intellectuals *spoke* about many things during those decades; they actually *debated*, however, only about a limited number of them. If we accept that the task of the historian of political ideas is to engage into a "wide-ranging investigation of the changing political languages in which societies talk to themselves",[32] then we claim that the path of research indicated above can best help us to understand the way this self-examination of Romanian society proceeded, from the time of the foundation of the political regime of constitutional monarchy, in the 1860's, up to the installation of communism. In other words, we think that precisely by studying the relationship between the debate on modernization, the discussion on domestic political issues in terms of a general characterization of the political system and the political values adopted by various authors one can better grasp the core issues, ideas and concepts around which the ideological orientations were built, in Romania, during the period under coverage, and one can better identify "what was actually discussed" by influential intellectual groups in a country where the most recurrent, intensely debated and politically relevant topics that feature in the public discourses tend to differ from those prevailing in the West.

Because domestic political issues were debated – at a more elevated level – in terms of the modernizing performances of the ruling elite, and because political projects were advocated by reference to the failures of

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[32] Quentin Skinner, *Liberty before Liberalism*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 105. See also Idem, "Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas", in *History and Theory* 8: 1, 1969, pp. 3-53; Bhikhu Parekh, R. N. Berki, "The History of Political Thought: a Critique of Q. Skinner's Methodology", in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 34: 2, 1973, pp. 163-184; James Tully, ed., *Meaning and Context: Quentin Skinner and His Critics*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1988.

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modernization, we consider that we are justified in using such terms as “social criticism” and “political thinking” as interchangeable, in order to refer to the ideological trends in view. “Political theory” in a more technical sense of the term – that is, the type of inquiry into political values and norms that goes under this name in the standard works of Western intellectual history – was of a lesser importance in Romania at the time. As in all countries of “belated modernization”, westernization was perceived as the most pressing intellectual challenge, and political matters were accordingly discussed primarily in relation to the urgencies of social-economic reform, or of the building or conservation of the national culture, and not by reference to abstract philosophical principles.

It does not follow from this that intellectual concerns that can more easily be included under the rubric of “political theory” were completely absent at the time. Sometimes they were openly exhibited, but most often they were inscribed in the texture of social and cultural criticism of the kind we have spoken about so far. Moreover, philosophical options were to a great extent determined by the more fundamental options made by the respective authors, within the range of the interconnected debates on modernization and the modernizing elite. A further task of our approach is, correspondingly, that of better disclosing the properly political views held by the authors in question.

This last kind of research is actually the one whose need has most intensely been felt over the post-communist period. The exit from totalitarianism and the attempt to erect – or resurrect – a liberal-democratic political regime has been accompanied by the search for an indigenous tradition of liberal-democratic thought. There has emerged a widespread opinion that the importation of recent theories from abroad is to be joined by the effort to “sanitize” the heritage of Romanian political thought, and to sharply dissociate between those elements of it that can be accommodated by

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a desirable political system – contributing as such to creating a political culture propitious to it – and those that are unpropitious for the project of political reform. We think that it is precisely our more detailed anatomy and more careful classification of the ideological trends that can help us to better characterize the political conceptions of the pre-communist thinkers, and eventually to identify intellectual alternatives that have hitherto been neglected.

4. The labels under which the protagonists of the first of the two ideological struggles referred to above – that on modernization in abstract terms – were placed are common to the history of most countries in the area.[33] From the Right, various brands of conservatives and indigenist nationalists condemned the rapid introduction of western institutions and practices, on the view that they had broken the course of "natural" or "organic" social evolution.[34] From the Left, socialists and populists criticized labor relationships in

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[33] Roumen Daskalov, "Ideas About, and Reactions to Modernization in the Balkans", in *East European Quarterly* 31: 2, 1997, pp. 141-180; Chantal Delsol, Michel Maslowski, dirs., *Histoire des idées politiques de l'Europe Centrale*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1998; Iván Zoltán Dénes, ed., *Liberty and the Search for Identity. Liberal Nationalisms and the Legacy of Empires*, Budapest, Central European University Press, 2006.

[34] For the genesis of organicist thinking see Karl Mannheim, *Conservatism: a Contribution to the Sociology of Knowledge*, ed. and transl. by David Kettler, Volker Meja and Nico Stehr, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986. For its adoption in the Romanian setting: Al. Zub, "Ranke şi directiva organicistă în cultura română", in *Istorie şi finalitate*, Bucureşti, Ed. Academiei, 1991, pp. 109-122. For the intermingling between organicism and sociological evolutionism: Maurice Mandelbaum, *History, Man and Reason. A Study in Nineteenth-century Thought*, Baltimore, The John Hopkins Press, 1971, pp. 141-269. Again for the Romanian adoption: Al. Zub, "Impactul bucklean în cultura română", in *Cunoaştere de sine şi integrare*, Iaşi, Junimea, 1986, pp. 152-166.

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agriculture and the inefficiency of the industrial sector. A "traditionalist" component was openly present in all these intellectual currents except socialism, while it was sometimes argued at the time that this last one also displayed a strange tendency of longing nostalgically for the traditional ways.[35] Finally, there existed, of course, a trend of "official" westernism or "bourgeois" modernism, which met the challenge of the contestations from both Right and Left, offering retrospective and prospective justifications for the advancement of modernity to the detriment of the traditional world – as well as for the continuation of the modernization processes under the aegis of a non-socialist political regime.

When we look, next, at the second of our inter-related ideological debates – the one on the modernizing elite –, we can notice that the contending camps were still more sharply differentiated. It emerges that, from very early on, a part of the political spectrum was targeted by various social critics as constituting the "core" of the ruling elite, and started to be identified with it in general terms. More precisely, the Liberal Party, officially founded in 1875, but whose antecedents went back as far as the period of the "preparation" for the revolution of 1848 – and itself built around the powerful family of the Brătianus –, was taken to incarnate a certain approach to modernization, inaugurated in the first half of the XIXth century and never abandoned – so the argument went – by the Romanian establishment. Before 1918, the Liberals were attacked from Right and Left, by critics placed on different layers of society and using arguments of various sorts – but whose ideological orientations can be classified under the four rubrics of (*Junimist*) "conservatism", (autochtonist) "nationalism", "socialism" and "populism". The Conservative Party, founded in 1880

[35] As argued at the time by the populist thinker Garabet Ibrăileanu, *Spiritul critic în cultura românească*, ed. de Rodica Rotaru şi Alexandru Piru, Chişinău, Litera, 1997 [1909, 1922], pp. 161-172.

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but having older historical antecedents, was considered, by the representatives of the last three ideological trends, as sharing with the liberals the guilt for the failures of modernization and for the unjust structure of society. Still, they all agreed that, as the fortunes of the conservatives had never stopped to decrease to the benefit of the other party of the "oligarchy", a sound social analysis had to concentrate on the constitutive principles and the functioning of the liberal establishment.

After the First World War, this criticism of the liberal-dominated oligarchy[36] was met by arguments meant to offer a defense of it. They gave rise, in their turn, to reinforcements of the arguments provided by the old schools of social-political thinking, and to new types of criticism. The ideological spectrum was modified, partly under the influence of wider European trends of thought.[37] The conservative school virtually disappeared as a significant voice – although we can follow its survival in the works of an individual author from the old generation, Constantin Rădulescu-Motru. Autochtonist nationalism gradually adopted the political stance of the radical Right, being appropriated, in the end, by fascism. Populism was rejuvenated as peasantism. The socialism movement split into social democracy and communism, each of them with a peculiar intellectual discourse. Corporatist ideas gained

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36 For an approach to oligarchic politics in another East European context see Andrew C. Janos, "The Decline of Oligarchy: Bureaucratic and Mass Politics in the Age of Dualism", in Andrew C. Janos, William B. Slottman, eds., *Revolution in Perspective: Essays on the Hungarian Soviet Republic of 1919*, Berkeley, The University of California Press, 1971, pp. 1-61.

37 For the intellectual trends oif the age, see: H. Stuart Hughes, *Consciousness and Society: the Reorientation of European Social Thought, 1890-1930*, New York, Octagon Books, 1976 [1958]; Karl Dietrich Bracher, *The Age of Ideologies: a History of Political Thought in the Ttwentieth Century*, transl. by Ewald Osers, London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1984.

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ground, one of the representatives of this doctrine – Mihail Manoilescu – eventually becoming a figure of European and world notoriety.[38]

Before 1918, skepticism towards westernization was deeply interconnected with the criticism of the Liberal Party, as the main agent of westernization. Anti-liberal arguments acquired a specific traditionalist resonance, while traditionalism came to be associated with a negative stance towards the liberals. This is why the pro-liberal arguments that developed, after 1918, in response to the previous social criticism – being associated mainly with the figures of Lovinescu and Zeletin – , spoke the language of modernism and anti-traditionalism, while the westernizer ideas embraced by the same thinkers came to be seen as inseparable from their pro-liberal apologetics. The two types of argumentation – in favor of westernization and, respectively, in praise of the westernizer practices of the liberal elite – are so strongly linked in the works of Lovinescu and Zeletin that we came to look at the connection between them as to a matter of logical necessity. As modernizing skepticism – together with socialist criticism – was intimately linked with targeting the oligarchy for the failures of modernization and for the mistaken way the predicament of adopting the western model was approached in Romania, so modernizing optimism came to be epitomized by authors, like Lovinescu and Zeletin, who tightly associated a modernist stance with an apology of the same oligarchy, systematically defending it against all previous criticism. As such, this last intellectual attitude has tended to be considered as the only form in which bourgeois modernism was voiced in pre-communist

[38] For the range of this notoriety see Philippe. C. Schmitter, "Still the Century of Corporatism?", in *The Review of Politics* 36: 1, 1974, pp. 85-131; Joseph Love, *Crafting the Third World. Theorizing Underdevelopment in Rumania and Brazil*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1996, pp. 71-98.

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Romania. Against this widely shared view, we argue that, alongside the anti-traditionalist and anti-Marxist authors that subscribed to the mainstream social-political developments, offering a rationalization for them, in the vein of Lovinescu and Zeletin, there could be heard at the time some voices that have subsequently been forgotten and missed from the record of intellectual history: a score of political authors who conjoined a vocal opposition to nationalist traditionalist and anti-western cultural trends, and a critical departure from the Marxist designs, with a no less resolute criticism of mainstream politics, considered as the root of social distortions and as the cause of political extremism of Right and Left. We set out to brig to light and sharply characterize this family of thinkers, by placing it on the ideological map of the time. Before proceeding with this, however, we shall first have to take a brief look at the inner logic of both the arguments leveled by the "critical culture"[39] against the establishment and those provided by Lovinescu and Zeletin for its defense.

5. The main blame put by the different political writers on the Romanian ruling stratum was the fact that it was not true to its professed self-definition. The elite of the Liberal Party recommended itself as the representative of a bourgeois middle class, the main agent of global capitalism in Romania, with the mission of propelling the country on the path of development characteristic to modern societies. In fact, as social critics argued, the members of the political establishment were only the representatives of a class of bureaucrats, making their living on the spoils of the state,

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[39] Let us underline that the notion of "critical culture" was recurrent in the debates of the time: see, Ştefan Zeletin, "Romantismul german şi cultura critică română" [1929], in *Neoliberalismul*, pp. 55-72. A work which put its imprint on the notion is Ilie Bădescu, *Sincronism european şi cultură critică românească*, Bucureşti, Ed. Ştiințifică şi Enciclopedică, 1984.

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and manipulating the state apparatus to their own benefit. The principle of social cohesion of the elite was not given by the role its members played in the economic process, but by the position they occupied within the state structure. Moreover, to the extent that they did play an economic role at all, this one was dependent on their entrenched political power. The industry they manned was not a genuine one – able to survive by the sheer mechanisms of the free market – but an artificial one, kept alive by protectionist policies and state subsidies. And the agrarian economy largely dominated by the same class of false bourgeois and state functionaries was a semi-feudal one, particular mixture of medieval and modern elements. The peasants, laboring under economic and legal conditions that brought together the evils of both feudal serfdom and capitalism, but enjoying none of their benefits, had to bear on their shoulders the heavy state apparatus, fashioned on the model of western states, but superimposed on a primitive society and a feeble economy. The fiscal system functioned in such a way as to systematically drive away the national wealth from the society at large, and to direct it to the small bureaucratic oligarchy and to the nascent faked industry created to its sole benefit.

A virtual "sociological theory" about the hidden character of the Romanian oligarchy was put forward, thus, by the political authors belonging to the four ideological camps of the "critical culture". The components of this theory did not appear all at once, but entered the intellectual scene at successive moments. They were present in all ideological discourses, but not always fully elaborated. They were sometimes held by authors not entirely conscious of the intellectual traditions they shared with many of their devoted allies and some of their avowed ideological rivals. Our historical reconstruction of this general view of Romanian state and society has to proceed, therefore, by the means of a careful identification and gathering together of small pieces of theory and intellectual building blocks spread

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across various utterances belonging to all parts of the ideological spectrum. It can only be an exercise in grasping the "tacit dimension"[40] of an age in the intellectual history of Romania – that is, of the entire welter of assumptions and semi-articulated ideas and presuppositions, cherished by most of the participants in the ideological conversation of the time.

When approached in this way, the four "ideologies of opposition" that criticized the establishment before and after the First World War will appear as much more unitary on the side of their descriptive sociology than previous historical accounts have presented them. They diverged mainly when moving from social analysis to projects of social and political reform. The alternative models of development they offered were based, however, on much the same ideas about the existing characteristics of Romanian society: over-bureaucratization, oligarchic politics, semi-feudal agriculture and imitative culture – this was the diagnostic of Romanian society posed, by using various terms and with different accents, by the social critics that undertook the task of exploring in depth the dilemma of Romanian modernization. Foremost, there was the overarching idea that the social and political elite of the time had to be characterized as neither "feudal" nor "bourgeois", but rather as a social configuration with no counterpart in the historical experience of the West, its cohesion being determined by the participation of its members to the bureaucratic machine, together with the tendency of the state apparatus itself to act as an instrument of income extraction to the exclusive benefit of the political class.

The intellectual matrix from which the sociological analyses targeting the oligarchy were derived was the famous theory of "forms without substance". The basic idea – first formulated by the conservative *Junimists* and their

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[40] Albert O. Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1977, p. 69.

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intellectual leader Maiorescu in the article already mentioned – that Romanian society was evolving in a distorted way, due to the uncritical grafting of western "forms" onto a society unprepared to sustain, to assimilate them, or to enable them to function according to their original (western) design, pervaded the entire intellectual history of Romania until the Second World War. First formulated by reference to the problem of cultural imitation, it soon acquired a dimension of social analysis and criticism. Alongside their vindication of cultural authenticity, the *Junimists* claimed a Romanian social order in accordance with its cultural environment. Condemning the falsification of western ideas in the Romanian setting, they underscored the social dysfunctions produced by the demagogical politics that made use of the very same ideas. Indicating the liberals as the main representatives of this type of politics, they sometimes depicted them as naïve enthusiasts of modernization, and some other times as cynical professionals of the political industry. While themselves prominent participants in the political game – or at least members of the "political class", in the most general sense of the term – , they were the initiators of a discourse of social criticism that was to be taken over, later on, by political writers originating from outside the circle of wealth and power. Turned to more radical uses and infused with a more "populist" and "democratic" spirit, these ideas, born within the confines of political conservatism, were to become – after corresponding re-elaborations – the meeting-ground of social reformers of all persuasions and the rallying-point of both left-wing and right-wing revolutionaries.

Disclosing the underlying unity of the critical culture leads us to question, once again, certain deep-sited tendencies prevalent in the scholarship on the topic. The point is made, this time, by reference not only to the Romanian scholarship but also to the foreign literature that has approached the Romanian and East European pre-

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communist heritage of social thought from the standpoint of international "development studies", on the view that the East European periphery has shared important structural features with the non-European regions of the world, all of them evolving on a path of development different from the one followed by the West.[41] Most of this last kind of scholarship tends to give a good assessment of the sociological wisdom displayed by left-wing (socialist and populist) authors,[42] but equally to disregard their larger cultural and ideological setting, and eventually to dismiss as irrelevant the insights given by their ideological rivals from the Right. At the same time, in so far as it has embarked on the task of advancing evaluative judgments concerning the old schools of social criticism, Romanian scholarship has either tended to concur with the same views[43] or, on the contrary, it tended to downplay the "skeptical modernizers" to the benefit of the modernist apologists – invoking either

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41 Some relevant titles: Henry L. Roberts, *Rumania. Political Problems of an Agrarian State*, Hamden, Conn., Archon Books, 1969 [1951]; Mitrany, *Marx Against the Peasant*; Michael Kitch, "Constantin Stere and Rumanian Populism" in *The Slavonic and East European Review* 53: 131, 1975, pp. 248-271; Idem, „Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea and Rumanian Marxism", in *The Slavonic and East European Review* 55: 1, 1977, pp. 65-89; Kenneth Jowitt, ed., *Social Change in Romania, 1860-1940. A Debate on Development in a European Nation*, Berkeley, University of California, Institute of International Studies, 1978; Daniel Chirot, "Ideology, Reality, and Competing Models of Development in Eastern Europe between the Two World Wars", in *East European Politics and Societies* 3: 3, 1989, pp. 378-411; Love, *Crafting the Third World*.

42 See especially Daniel Chirot, "Neoliberal and Social Democratic Theories of Development: the Zeletin-Voinea Debate Concerning Romania's Prospects in the 1920's and Its Contemporary Importance", in Jowitt, ed. *Social Change in Romania*, pp. 31-52,

43 See for example Stahl, *Gânditori şi curente de istorie socială românească*. Of great relevance is Zoltán Rostás, *Monografia ca utopie. Interviuri cu Henri H. Stahl*, Bucureşti, Paideia, 2000.

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the former ones' reactionary leanings[44] or their Marxist heterodoxy.[45] Subscribing to the above-mentioned literature with a development studies perspective in validating the "critical" sociologists against their "apologetic" rivals, we are led to underline the fact that the basic recurrent ideas of the "critical culture" were born, in Romania, in the headquarters of the political Right: emerged in the footsteps of the conservative school of *Junimea*, they became the common ground of all ideological orientations. Sometimes conjoined with proposals of reform and political solutions that certainly look unacceptable with the hindsight of the XXth century's experience, they still encapsulate an intimate understanding of the predicament of Romanian modernization.

6. Of the pair of classical authors who epitomize the modernist attitude – and of the score of lesser figures who wrote in the same vein – Ştefan Zeletin was certainly the one whose works most openly display and most systematically elaborate a chain of arguments meant to offer an apology of the modernizing elite. Zeletin's stance as an ideological defender of the Liberal Party does not need to be read between the lines. On the contrary, it is emphatically adopted as an official position, by this author who stroke one of his commentators as "an unalloyed example of Antonio Gramsci's 'organic intellectual', providing an elaborate rationalization of the existing distribution of wealth and power".[46] Zeletin can best be credited for giving wide currency, in Romanian political parlance, to the very term "oligarchy", as a designation of the modernizing establishment and as the most convenient catchword for cursorily describing its authoritarian and interventionist

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[44] A revealing example is Ornea, *Junimea şi junimismul*, pp. 194-197.

[45] Revealing examples: Idem, *Poporanismul*; Idem, *Opera lui C. Dobrogeanu-Gherea*. See also Ştefania Mihăilescu, *Poporanismul şi mişcarea socialistă din România*, Bucureşti, Ed. Politică, 1988.

[46] Love, *Crafting the Third World*, p. 47.

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policies. Accepting the argument of the previous social critics that Romanian oligarchy was something different from the western bourgeoisie, Zeletin sets out to offer retrospective justifications for all these differences. He presents the apparently non-capitalist behavior of the self-professed Romanian capitalists as the only possible strategy by which genuine capitalism could have been introduced to the country, explaining all the other reprehensible features of the social-political system as unavoidable concomitants of the best possible long-term approach to westernization, that in the near future would be recognized by everybody as episodes of the glorious record of progress. Sometimes, Zeletin's ambition to offer final refutations to all the arguments advanced by the "critical culture" borders on paradox, and we cannot avoid the feeling that he consciously defies our common sense, by claiming a positive role to horrific social phenomena and to cynical political maneuverings. In short – and unlike Lovinescu, in whose case this apologetic dimension stands somehow in the back-stage – Zeletin writes as an "integral" defender of the Romanian economic, social and political elite.

This characterization of Zeletin as a resolute defender of the *status quo* can only be reinforced if we take into account the genesis of his system of thought. As we reconstructed it with another occasion,[47] Zeletin's intellectual evolution looks very surprising. Indeed, if in *The Romanian Bourgeoisie* and *Neoliberalism* Zeletin speaks as both an apologists of the Liberal elite and a devout westernizer, it appears that, in previous pieces with a social and political content, he argued as a kind of traditionalist and – still more significantly – as a bitter critique of the same political elite. It seems that, until the very last moment before launching the series of works in which he formulated

[47] Victor Rizescu, "Un critic al Partidului Liberal: primul Ştefan Zeletin", in *Studia Politica. Romanian Political Science Review*, 1: 3, 2001, pp. 841-872.

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a sophisticated defense of the strategy of westernization followed by the Liberals, Zeletin was nothing else but one of the host of anti-liberal social critics. At some point in his intellectual evolution, he started to build an impressive rationalization for everything that he had beforehand used to blame as historical monstrosities. This fact can only shed a revealing light on the true character of his apology of the Romanian oligarchy.

As the ideas of the "first Zeletin" had derived from his adoption of the social diagnostic of "forms without substance", so the system of ideas that Zeletin developed when embracing the opposite stance is based on his rejection of the very same social diagnostic. As he now argues, the description of Romanian society in such terms comes from the fact that the social analysts of all persuasions do not understand where to look in order to discover the social-economic base that corresponds to the institutional imports taken from the West. They rightly argue that a genuine parliamentary state with a large bureaucratic apparatus can only be based on an authentic bourgeois, capitalist society. Comparing local realities with those prevalent in the West, they conclude that such social-economic preconditions for organic development are not met in Romania: hence, their characterization of Romanian society as a distortion of the western one. The error of this social diagnostic can be easily disclosed, however, if we understand that the social and economic realities of a backward country like Romania have to be compared not with those of the contemporary West, but with those prevalent in the West centuries before. Romanian capitalism appears as a sham only if it is measured by the criteria of XIXth century western economic life. It compares well, however, with the economic arrangements of the western European countries in the age of mercantilism, that is, in the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries. The political structure of a parliamentary liberal state has not been erected, in

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Romania, on the shallow basis of an agrarian, feudal economy, but on the firm foundation of a capitalist economy that is passing through its first stages of evolution. And the modifications that the XIXth century political structure imported from the West suffered in Romania are themselves not arbitrary distortions, but the result of a necessary effort – and of a spontaneous social reflex – to adapt the state forms to the economic base.

Zeletin offers justifications, thus, for both the social-economic and the political deplorable aspects of the Romanian life, which were condemned by the social critics of the previous decades. They all appear as XIXth century approximations of older phenomena recorded by western history. Romania has not followed an "abnormal" or "monstrous" path of development, he argues, but only repeated, at a latter time and in different circumstances, the stages of development previously followed by the West. He makes this claim not only by reference to Romania, but also with respect to the category of the "backward" countries generally. He explicitly takes issue with the idea – clearly formulated in Romania by the socialist Dobrogeanu-Gherea[48] but implicitly accepted by virtually the entire "critical culture" – that retarded countries are bound to follow a trajectory of social evolution of their own. There is only one single succession of developmental stages that a society might take in its progression from the traditional to the modern world. If a major difference exists between early and late developing countries, it consists in the fact that latecomers to modernization advance on the course of

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[48] See especially Constantin Dobrogeabu-Gherea, "Post-scriptum sau cuvinte uitate" [1908], in *Opere complete*, ed de Ion Popescu-Puțuri et al., vol 3, Bucureşti, Ed. Politică, 1977, pp. 476-504. See also Henri H. Stahl, "Théories de C. Dobrogeanu Gherea sur les lois de la penetration du capitalisme dans les 'pays retardaires'", in *Review* (of the "Fernand Braudel Center") 2: 1, 1978, pp. 101-114.

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evolution at a much accelerated pace, occasionally skipping some of its stations. This intellectual artifice enables Zeletin not only to retrospectively justify the authoritarian politics, interventionist economy and social misery of the previous age, but also to offer prospective rationalizations for an even tighter economic interventionism and a still more authoritarian political system – ingeniously designated as "neoliberalism" – , that Romania, this time together with the West, is expected to experience in the nearest future.

7. As the various arguments developed by the critical culture can be traced back to the overarching idea of "forms without substance", so the pro-establishment arguments of Lovinescu and Zeletin can be described as deriving from the effort to reject this general idea. The intellectual strategies they employed in order to accomplish this task were very different, however. In the account of Zeletin, the error of the critical culture lays at the deep level of the very description of the process of modernization. The social critics of all persuasions are wrong in not being able to distinguish the "substance" – that is, the capitalist economy of a commercial, mercantilist type – that stood as the counterpart of institutional innovation, although it is conspicuously displayed in open light. In the account of Lovinescu, on the other hand, the critical culture is right on its descriptive side, and only fails when moving to prescriptions. The failure of the social critics comes from their refusal to accept the inevitability of the evils they scorn. In other words, Lovinescu accepts the diagnostic of "forms without substance" as valid, at the same time arguing that, in countries like Romania, it could have not happened otherwise, and everything is to the better. The imitation of the West is the fate of all latecomers to modernization, and such imitation can only be done by first adopting the western-type political, institutional and ideological "superstructure", in the absence of corresponding social and economic

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foundations. Modernization necessarily proceeds, here, "from upside down", and it has to be implemented in the field of institutions before taking roots at the deep levels of society. Certain distortions result as unavoidably from this reversal of the developmental stages. Over the long run, however, all these unintended consequences of the process of modernization-through-imitation would disappear, both the social base and the political superstructure coming to approximate those of the western countries. Thus, while for Zeletin there is no such thing as a special path of development for a backward country, Lovinescu holds that Romanian development is indeed different from that of the West, but nevertheless natural for any country outside the confines of the West. Both arguments, however, amount to presenting the social phenomena denunciated as abnormal by the critical culture as necessary evils that arise on the path of westernization, and to understand westernization itself as desirable, in the long run benefic, and ultimately both unavoidable and irreversible.

No predecessor of Zeletin has been identified to the present. Otherwise, the argument that Lovinescu employed when joining Zeletin's struggle against the "reactionary forces" did have an easily detectable pedigree. It is most probable that the author who can be credited to have been the first that responded to Maiorescu's denunciation of the disjunction between forms and substance with the argument that (legal and institutional) forms could be expected to generate, in the predictable future, the corresponding (cultural, social and economic) substance, was the philosopher and historian Alexandru D. Xenopol. His reaction against the *Junimist* modernizing skepticism was as rapid as is could have been. Already in 1868, immediately after reading, when studying in Germany – with a scholarship paid by the *Junimea* cultural society –, Maiorescu's "Against the Present Direction of Romanian Culture", he sent a letter to Iacob Negruzzi – one of the

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founders of the *Junimea* society and for many years director of its journal, *Literary Conversations* – , in which he warned against the mood of general skepticism that Maiorescu's rhetoric was likely to bring forth.[49]

Xenopol broadened his arguments, meant to dispel the feeling of pessimism regarding Romania's prospects of modernization that irresistibly irradiated from *Junimist* criticism – and also to counteract the reactionary implications that could have been drawn from Maiorescu's otherwise very moderate conservative rhetoric – , in a series of articles published in 1870-1877, under the general title "Studies on Our Present Condition". Granting that institutional imports could be damaging, indeed, if unfitted to the general social structure, he underlined the fact that there was no reason whatsoever to question the applicability to the Romanian setting of the most general principles of legislation and institutional organization brought into being by western modernity. The only legitimate concern, he said, was to carefully adjust those principles and institutional devices to the specific configuration of the society that adopted them, or in other words to observe the difference between their basic structure – with universal relevance – and the peculiar forms they had taken in their place of origin. When contemplating the splendid functioning of the major principles of governance in the advanced countries of Europe we have to distinguish, thus, between their inner core and their outward "cover", to reject the second and to adopt the first, and to enmesh this last one into a new cover, fit for the new realities that the same principles are now expected to address.[50]

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[49] A. D. Xenopol, "Scrisoare către Iacob Negruzzi" [1868], in *Scrieri social-filozofice*, ed de N. Gogoneață şi Z. Ornea, Bucureşti, Ed. Ştiințifică, 1967, pp. 146-155.

[50] Idem, "Despre reforma aşezămintelor noastre" [1874], in Eugen Lovinescu, coord., *Antologia ideologiei junimiste*, Bucureşti, Casa Şcoalelor, 1942, pp. 165-278.

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Xenopol takes several steps further in approximating the general position that most easily comes to mind when the name of Lovinescu is invoked several years later, in his works with an economic content. Joining the growing opposition – initiated by the economists Dionisie Pop-Marțian and Petre S. Aurelian – against the free-trade ideas that had been dominating in the country up to that time, Xenopol develops his arguments – to the extent that state intervention is required for the Romanian infant industry to take off – into a more general statement related to the precedence that political artifice unavoidably has, in a backward country, on spontaneous social and economic processes.[51]

Another author who (implicitly) contributed to the unfolding of the argument that imported forms can generate their corresponding substance was the literary historian Pompiliu Eliade. In a doctoral dissertation published at Paris in 1898, and dealing with the impact of French ideas in the Romanian principalities, at the end of the XVIIIth century and the beginning of the XIXth, this enthusiastic supporter of acculturation went as far as to say that, when looking to the influence that the western country exerted on the eastern one, what we can see is not the image of a backward people in the process of being regenerated, through the contact with a more developed civilization: in fact, French influence meant the very birth of the Romanian people, for the first time molded and disentangled now from the amorphous barbarity of the late Turkish domination.[52]

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[51] Idem, "Comerțul exterior al României" [1881], quoted in John Michael Montias, "Notes on the Romanian Debate on Sheltered Industrialization", in Jowitt, ed., *Social Change in Romania*, p. 60. See also Love, *Crafting the Third World*, pp. 71-74; A. D. Xenopol, *Opere economice*, ed. de Ion Veverca, Bucureşti, Ed. Ştiințifică, 1967.

[52] Pompiliu Eliade, *Influența franceză asupra spiritului public în România*, ed. şi trad. de Aurelia Dumitraşcu, Bucureşti, Humanitas, 2000 [1898].

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In Lovinescu's *History of Modern Romanian Civilization*, the argument that imitative modernization is natural and legitimate is split up into several theoretical statements that all lead to the same conclusion. According to the author's own understanding, they should be seen as historical "laws" with universal relevance. The relationship between these laws and the historical narrative of the creation of modern Romania is twofold. On the one hand, they are heuristic instruments with an explanative function: the story of Romanian's encounter with western modernity becomes intelligible, so Lovinescu thinks, only if approached from the standpoint of these sociological generalizations. On the other hand, the record of Romanian history is itself used in order to compile empirical evidence supporting the same generalizations. The theoretical statements are established through the parallel analysis of, and the continuous comparison between, two series of historical developments: first, the process of Romanian modernization, studied in detail; and second, a kaleidoscopic collection of facts and phenomena, picked up – quite randomly, one might add – from across the entire record of European and world history. While Lovinescu moves back and forth between these two areas of study throughout the entire work, the explorations into the Romanian case are concentrated in the first volume – *The Revolutionary Forces* – and the considerations of a more general character are largely placed in the third one – *The Laws of the Formation of Romanian Civilization*.

Although Lovinescu never makes an inventory of his "laws", we can easily identify four such general statements, which can be ordered in a somewhat "logical" sequence and according to their level of generality. The first of them concerns the principle of "synchronism", or "imitation", or else "interdependency". It says that nations and civilizations naturally interact with each other, most often the less developed of them imitating the one placed on a higher level on the developmental scale. This fact should not be seen as

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an evil, Lovinescu thinks, but simply as the only means for the improvement of societies. The second historical law says that, when it occurs, imitation will proceed from upside down, starting with the institutional forms and not with the social substance. The third statement is related to the opposition between revolutionary and evolutionary change. It says that, far from being inescapably calamitous events, revolutionary episodes are natural occurrences in the history of virtually all societies. Gradual transformations are not always possible, and sometimes a violent break with the past – of which the sudden and enthusiastic imitation of another civilization is an example – is beneficial. Finally, the last theoretical statement says that ideological transfers from one society to another take precedence, chronologically, on economic influences, and have to be seen accordingly as the first and most important of the mechanisms by which the synchronization of societies is accomplished.

As reconstructed in the framework of these laws, the history of the creation of modern Romania appears as full of rationality. The social and political arrangements of past and present Romania are legitimated as embodying this rationality of the historical process, and the Liberal Party, as the leading "revolutionary force", is consecrated as the arm of historical destiny. Lovinescu also employs his set of historical laws as a polemical device. In the second volume of the book – *The Reactionary Forces* – , and occasionally in other parts of it, the criticisms adduced against the modernizing elite of the Liberals by the four ideological currents of *Junimism*, nationalism, socialism and populism are taken one by one and evaluated – and their claims of scientific social criticism are rejected – in light of Lovinescu's own conception of historical evolution. Responding to the anti-establishment and "traditionalist" (or socialist) political writers from a pro-liberal standpoint, Lovinescu also sets himself against the author who preceded him in offering a rationalization of the liberal-sponsored

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modernization and a systematic rejection of the anti-liberal arguments. The materialistic determinism of Zeletin is condemned, not in the name of voluntarist principles or of "methodological individualism", but in order to be replaced by a "softer" determinism of an "idealist" sort.

Unlike Zeletin, Lovinescu never argues that the liberal-democratic order has run its course and has to be replaced by a new political system. Still, his theoretical allegiance to the foundational principles of liberal democracy never turns into a significant pleading for their more effective institutionalization in the Romanian environment. Following Zeletin in this respect, Lovinescu accepts the "oligarchic" politics of the Liberals as a fact to be taken for granted,[53] never taking pains to openly criticize its most deplorable features. To the extent that they can be detected at all in his writings, Lovinescu's hopes for a broadening of the political system and a restructuring of the social arrangements are placed in a hardly foreseeable future, and never give rise to any open disagreements with the establishment of the day. As Zeletin's oligarchic apologetics, Lovinescu's strategy of muting his general political views for the sake of defending the Romanian political elite emerges more clearly when he is compared with some of his contemporary fellow-travelers of the anti-traditionalist camp.

8. As said above, as far as their sociological conceptions – related to the desirability of western-type modernization – are concerned, the classical modernists have most often been granted unqualified good assessments in the scholarship of the field. The corresponding assessment of their political stance has generally led, however, to two different and opposite opinions. Indeed, in so far as it addresses the problem of the political views that went together with the various conceptions about social modernization

53 Lovinescu, *Istoria civilizației*, vol. 2: *Forțele reacționare*, pp. 31-32.

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and national development voiced in pre-communist Romania, the existing literature has reached one of the following conclusions: it either assimilated the modernist stance with a liberal-democratic attitude – due to the fact that the classical modernists spoke as defenders of the Liberal Party, as well as due to the common, and to a large extent misleading, identification of the westernizers of non-western societies with the generic liberalism born in the West;[54] or, taking account of the avowed argumentation in favor of interventionist and collectivist practices given by these authors, or else of the frailty of their liberal-democratic advocacy, it concluded that no intellectual trend resonating with the major concerns of post-communist democratization can be found in the pre-communist cultural heritage of the country.[55]

Taking advantage of the identification of a formerly neglected intellectual attitude, we can take a departure from these trends of scholarship. As we already pointed out above, we think that the pre-communist political authors who conjoined a modernist stance – in much the same way as Lovinescu and Zeletin – and an adverse stance towards the Liberal Party "oligarchy" – in much the same way as the "critical culture" scorned by both Zeletin and Lovinescu, and sometimes coming in its footsteps – , were driven by this fundamental intellectual choice much closer than the "official" modernists to a significant pleading for liberal-democratic values.

In a previous article we considered at great length the figure of maybe the most interesting of these political

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[54] Cases in point are Ornea, *Anii treizeci*; Petreu, *Un trecut deocheat*; Nemoianu, *România şi liberalismele ei*.

[55] This is the view prevalent in such works as Daniel Barbu, *Politica pentru barbari*, Bucureşti, Nemira, 2005; Adrian-Paul Iliescu, *Anatomia răului politic*, Bucureşti, Ideea Europeană, 2006 [2005].

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authors.[56] The stream of articles published, over four decades, by the intriguing journalist, literary critic and former socialist militant H. Sanielevici display precisely that combination of vocal disagreement with the anti-modern culture whose efficient rejection was mainly responsible for the glory acquired by Lovinescu and Zeletin, with a no less resolute and open disagreement – advocated by plain references to the *Junimist* tradition of social thought – with the prevailing oligarchic politics and interventionist economy. In the end, his social analyses even enable Sanielevici to point precisely to the same liberal establishment as to the main source of cultural obscurantism and ideological reaction. While not as ingenious a social thinker as Zeletin, and neither such a powerful commentator of cultural phenomena and intellectual trends like Lovinescu, Sanielevici emerges, at a closer scrutiny, as a valuable representative of the critical culture's sociology, and as a political thinker that exemplifies much better than any of the two an engaged involvement with the extension of liberal and democratic values.

In fact, the intellectual trend opposed to interventionist economy, occasionally broadened towards the stance of political liberalism, was not as feeble in pre-communist Romania as both a historiography indebted to the ideas of economic nationalism and protectionism and the power of the "Zeletinist" tradition[57] made us to think. Authors like

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[56] Victor Rizescu, "Înțelepciunea nebunului sau gândirea politică a lui Henric Sanielevici", in *Studia Politica. Romanian Political Science Review* 2: 3, 2002, pp. 725-760.

[57] Most relevant titles: Costin Murgescu, *Mersul ideilor economice la români*, Bucureşti, Ed. Enciclopedică, vols. 1-2, 1987-1990; Ioan Saizu, *Modernizarea României contemporane. Perioada interbelică. Pas şi impas*, Bucureşti, Ed. Academiei, 1991; Radu-Dan Vlad, *Gândirea economică românească despre industrializare, 1859-1900*, Bucureşti, Mica Valahie, 2001.

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Eugen Demetrescu,[58] George Strat,[59] Gheorghe Taşcă[60] or Anastasie Gusti[61] are good cases in point, while the inexplicably forgotten Ştefan Antim came closest to Sanielevici by offering an original interpretation of the sociology of "forms" and "substance", with the task of explaining the nature of the Romanian ruling oligarchy.[62] Other examples could follow.[63]

This liberal – and avowedly anti-Liberal Party – tradition of thinking will not constitute the object of the remaining of this article. Instead, we shall focus on an intellectual figure which, set in the same comparative perspective with Lovinescu and Zeletin, appears as a better example of open involvement with the ideals of social justice and democratic political participation. This comparison will also enable us to take a look on a topic that has featured heavily in recent Romanian cultural debates: namely, the demand to go back to the political wisdom of the "1848 generation", eventually using the works of the inter-war modernists as a way of access to this pre-*Junimist* period in the evolution of Romanian culture.

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58 Eugen Demetrescu, *Liberalismul economic în evoluția României moderne*, Bucureşti, n. p, 1940.

59 George Strat, *Elogiul libertății*, Bucureşti, Tipografia de Artă Leopold Geller, 1937.

60 Gheorghe Taşcă, *Liberalism, corporatism, intervenționism*, Bucureşti, n. p., 1938.

61 Anastasie Gusti, *Scrieri sociale, politice şi economice*, ed. de George Strat, Bucureşti, Editura Librăriei Universitare I. Cărăbaş, 1940.

62 Ştefan Antim, *Chestiunea socială în România*, Bucureşti, Imprimeria "La Roumanie", 1908; Idem, *Chestia evreiască Studiu Social*, Bucureşti, "Librăria Nouă" Carol P. Segal, 1918; Idem, *Chestia țărănească. Studiu Social*, Craiova, Institutul de Editură "Samintca", 1919; Idem, *Studii şi portrete*, Craiova, Ramuri, n. d. [1936]; Idem, *Alte studii şi portrete*, Bucureşti, Adevărul s. a., n. d. [1937].

63 See the collection of the journal *Libertatea. Economică, politică, socială, culturală* (Bucureşti, 1933-1940), with George Strat as a chief-editor.

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Indeed, there has been a widespread tendency in Romanian scholarship to depict interwar modernism as a resuscitation of the modernizing optimism characteristic of the 1848 period, after several decades of growing modernizing skepticism.[64] As embodied in the works of Lovinescu and Zeletin, this XXth century mode of thinking is considered to exemplify a kind of intellectual attitude that incorporates that "openness" towards things modern and foreign characteristic of the pre-*Junimist* era, while avoiding – due to the lessons of *Junimist* criticism – both patriotic exaggerations and political naiveté. Besides, Lovinescu and his disciples are indicated as the legitimate heirs of both "fortyeightism" (in the political field) and *Junimism* (in the artistic field): taking from the later the doctrine of the "autonomy of art", they dissociated it from any conservative ideological leanings and infused it with the political values of liberalism and democracy.[65] Zeletin, on the other hand, appears as the thinker who placed the modernist attitude of the fortyeighters on firmer intellectual foundations, by adding to it the dimension of social and economic analysis.

While it is true that, in Zeletin and Lovinescu, modernizing optimism was only the reverse side of their attempt to offer final and systematic refutations of the various expressions of post-1848 skepticism – of *Junimist* progeny – regarding westernization, we shall argue that this mode of thinking in favor of the adoption of the western

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[64] Cases in point are, once again, works such as Marino, "Pentru Europa"; Idem, *Politică şi cultură*; Nemoianu, *România şi liberalismele ei*. See also Adrian Marino în dialog cu Sorin Antohi, *Al treilea discurs: cultură, ideologie şi politică în România*, Iaşi, Polirom, 2001.

[65] Virgil Nemoianu, "Variable Socio-Political Functions of Aesthetic Doctrines. Lovinescu vs. Western Aestheticism", in Jowitt, ed., *Social Change in Romania*, pp. 174-207. The most consistent *Junimist* defense of the autonomy of art is P. P. Negulescu, *Polemice*, ed. de Gheorghe Vlăduțescu, Bucureşti, Ed. Fundației Culturale Române, 1992 [1895].

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model has to be seen as a new departure in the intellectual history of Romania, rather than as a reinforcement of the 1848 tradition. This should not be taken to mean, however, that the last mentioned intellectual tradition was extinct in the first half of the XXth century. On the contrary, we aim to disclose an intellectual attitude that can legitimately be characterized as a continuation of it.

As a matter of fact, this second type of formulating a pro-western case is present, to some extent, in the very body of Lovinescu's *History of Modern Romanian Civilization*. This book, that has generally been seen as offering a unitary and firmly consistent line of reasoning, is actually build around two different – and heterogeneous – kinds of argumentation. Lovinescu's main discourse, presented in brief above, is accompanied by an underlying discourse, whose normative conclusions – the desirable character of westernization – is similar, but whose basic principles and intellectual premises are different.

According to the first discourse, the Romanians are likely to succeed in integrating themselves into the western-type civilization because all civilizations necessarily interact with each other, being continuously molded by external influences. In other words, westernization is legitimate because there are no such things as immutable national essences, mutually irreconcilable to each other, that cannot be fused together into a functional synthesis. According to the second discourse, the Romanians are likely to adopt western civilization successfully precisely because they are western by their innate essence. The Latin component of their national identity – that Lovinescu, in a confusing way very characteristic to the times, often refers to as about their "racial characteristics"[66] – is the defining such building block of "Romaniannes". Although defined by reference to cultural facts, and not to ethnic or racial ones, Latinity is

[66] Lovinescu, *Istoria civilizației*, vol.1: *Forțele revoluționare*, pp. 5-6.

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presented thus, by Lovinescu, as an unchanging essence and not as a cultural texture likely to be remolded by historical processes of acculturation. And it is precisely their defining Latin character that somehow predetermines the Romanians for an unproblematic westernization, had the "reactionary forces" not been unfortunately present for hindering the inescapable process of historical change. Joining the western civilization, Romanians are actually returning to where they rightly belong, after a long historical period when nefarious – and contingent – non-western influences prevented them from developing their latent potentialities.[67]

The discovery of the West was thus, for the Romanians, the rediscovery of their occidental brethrens. This way of looking to occidentalization was certainly not peculiar to Lovinescu. It was only a common view that rested – in the words of a foreign observer of Romania – on the idea that "Romanian society is essentially a part of western society and [...] is moving along with it. This has been the position of those that have stressed Romania's Latinity and French connections, who like to regard Bucharest as the little Paris of the Balkans, and Romanian civilization as the outpost of western culture against a Slavic and Barbaric East".[68] At the time Lovinescu was writing, the general "autochtonist" twist of Romanian nationalism – taking place around 1900 – had already transformed such a view into a minority one. Several decades beforehand, however, this vision had been dominant in Romanian culture. Before the *Junimists* identified westernization as an intellectual challenge – and before Xenopol, Lovinescu or Zeletin set out to offer their elaborate responses to the *Junimist* objections against rapid westernization – a form of spontaneous – and, by comparison to the later forms, mentioned above, naïve – kind of westernizer stance

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[67] *Ibid.,* pp. 6, 10, 36.

[68] Roberts, *Rumania*, pp. 339-340.

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had been characteristic to the Romanian educated strata. Before Maiorescu and his colleagues posed the question of westernization in terms of the dichotomy between "forms" and "substance", the generation of the fortyeighters had anticipated an answer to the puzzle of modernization thus formulated. This first Romanian westernizer discourse was nothing else than the emerging nationalist ideology itself. The nationalist thinking of the first half of the XIXth century rested on the view that the inner substance of the Romanian national identity was itself of a western kind, and thus it was prone to rapidly integrate into the expanding European civilization. The discovery of the West was nothing else, according to this view, than a rediscovery of the national essence.[69]

Moreover, far from being specific to the Romanians, this articulation of ardent nationalism and acceptance of western influences was actually a feature of virtually all the East European national ideologies, in the first part of the XIXth century. Throughout the region, the shaping of national identities and the rise of nationalist ideologies went hand in hand with admiration for the West, and with the eagerness to emulate it.[70] Comparison to the West, with the accompanying embarrassment, was everywhere – and somewhat paradoxically – a component of the new patriotic pride, and the inflation of this national pride was the reverse side of the drive to westernization. The (real or imagined) "virtues" of western civilization were taken as the privileged

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[69] John C. Campbell, *French Influence and the Rise of Roumanian Nationalism. The Generation of 1848*, New York, Arno Press, 1971 [1940]; Paul Cornea, *Originile romantismului românesc: spiritul public, mişcarea ideilor şi literatura între 1780-1840,* Bucureşti, Cartea Românească, 2008 [1972].

[70] Robin Okey, *Eastern Europe 1740-1985: Feudalism to Communism*, sec. ed., London, Unwin Hyman, 1989, pp. 59-83; Maciej Janowski, "Three Historians", in *CEU History Department Yearbook* 2001-2002, pp. 199-232; Diana Mishkova, "The Interesting Anomaly of Balkan Liberalism", in Dénes, ed., *Liberty and the Search for Identity*, pp. 399-456.

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reference for any attempt at understanding and further forging the national character. The same was true for the historical explorations – accompanied by a great degree of imagining – into the national past of each of the peoples from the region. This one – together with the supposed national *psyche* that had evolved from it – was scrutinized in an attempt at identifying, beyond the recent centuries of degradation and beyond the present condition of misery, those historical episodes and traits of character which could certify that the people in question had sometimes been – and in spite of the appearances still was – the repository of the same kind of virtues as those exhibited by the great peoples of the West. Recipes of national regeneration were formulated accordingly, by the means of which those virtues were to be re-enacted.

The Latin component of the Romanian identity was a privileged such certificate of noblesse. While not employing the very terms of "form" and "substance" explicitly, the authors of the first half of the XIXth century implicitly argued that the substance of the Romanian nation, as Latin, was of the same essence as the forms of western civilization, and as such the discovery of the West by the Romanians was only a rediscovery of their inner self, for centuries hidden to themselves and to others by the "forms" of an alien, Byzantine-Slavic-Oriental civilization. By imitating "Europe", the Romanians were not doing anything else than to let free their own identity from the chains of accidental historical influences. The Latinist ideology of the period was thus only the Romanian form of the incipient westernizer discourse characteristic to the entire area. While their neighbors had to search for such proofs of compatibility with the West in the heroic record of national history, the Romanians – although doing the same thing no less extensively – could invoke their very national "essence" as the supreme argument.

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This type of nationalist discourse, and the form of historical consciousness that went together with it, entered into decline after the 1860's under the attack of *Junimism.*[71] Later on, after 1900, this type of pro-western nationalism was gradually replaced by a new variety of nationalist discourse, that of autochtonism.[72] The new brand of nationalism was not arguing any more that the Romanians were worthy of being rescued by the West from among their Slavic and Oriental neighbors. On the contrary, it argued that they stood, either by themselves or together with the other Orthodox peoples, as a self-contained civilization, whose values could not and must not be compared to the western ones, and certainly were not hierarchically inferior to them. However, after 1900, the old, pro-western nationalism still glimmers in the works of several authors. Driven away from the field of historical studies and philology – that had constituted their former privileged preserve – by the *Junimists* and the new nationalist thinkers, it resurfaces, under the guise of another discipline – social psychology – in the book *On the Psychology of the Romanian People*, published in 1907 by the sociologist Dumitru Drăghicescu.[73]

The best way to succinctly characterize Drăghicescu's thinking on the relationship between Romania and the West is as a sample of pre-*Junimist* nationalist discourse that has survived the attacks of *Junimist* criticism. Overall, the characterization of "a fortyeighter in the XXth century" best suites Drăghicescu, of all the interwar modernist writers,

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71 For the attack of *Junimea* against the Latinist ideas see Titu Maiorescu, "Contra şcoalei Bărnuţiu" [1868], in *Critice*, ed. de Domnica Filimon, Bucureşti, Ed. Elion, 2000 [1908] pp. 387-428; George Panu, "Studiul istoriei la români" [1874], in Eugen Lovinescu, ed., *Antologia ideologiei junimiste*, Bucureşti, Casa Şcoalelor, 1942, pp. 283-322.

72 Ornea, *Sămănătorismul*.

73 D. Drăghicescu, *Din psihologia poporului român*, ed. de Elisabeta Simion, Bucureşti, Albatros, 1995 [1907].

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precisely because, unlike the other authors of the period who looked at the design of westernization with optimism, he is not much concerned to set himself against the tradition inaugurated by Maiorescu. Most of the time, Drăghicescu seems to ignore the "critical culture", although he appears to have been entirely conscious of it.[74] In particular, Drăghicescu's understanding of the issue of national identity, as it related to the challenge of modernization, is a reinforcement of the dominating nationalist discourse of the 1848 period. It is an expression of the belief that westernization should not be seen as a major problem, precisely because, far from running counter to the deep characteristics of Romanian society, it resonates with its inner life and its defining traits.

As a work which sets the task of identifying the national psychology of the Romanians, *On the Psychology of the Romanian People* seems to belong together with the long series of attempts at formulating a metaphysics of the Romanian nation in an autochtonist guise that the Romanian culture has produced.[75] Its general orientation is, however, strikingly different. Drăghicescu's approach to the subject as a social psychologist involves a great deal of historical considerations, distilled from the works of the classical Romanian historians A. D. Xenopol, N. Iorga, I. Bogdan and D. Onciul. In an age of scientism, Drăghicescu likes to compare his investigations on the characteristics of a nation with those of a chemist on the structure of a substance. Like the latter one, he has to separate the basic, and indivisible, elements that entered into the composition of the national substance. These are the defining traits of the various national groups fused, along history, in the

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[74] As proved by Idem, *Titu Maiorescu. Schiță de biografie psiho-sociologică*, Bucureşti, n. p., n. d. [1940].

[75] Sorin Antohi, "Romania and the Balkans: from Geocultural Bovarism to Ethnic Onthology" in Tr@nsit-Virtuelles Forum 21, 2002, pp. 1-31.

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Romanian synthesis, or influencing it from outside. Further, he has to establish the external conditions under which the "chemical" reactions of national fusion took place –, that is to trace the influences of the historical environment on the process of national elaboration, during its successive stages. Present collective Romanian psychology will thus become intelligible as a combination of primary elements under specific economic, social and political conditions.

The national substance has a hard core and several secondary additions. The original nucleus of the Romanian mind is composed of two components: the Dacian and the Latin, with the predominance of the latter. All further additions in fact corrupted this original synthesis. The predatory barbarians, the Slavs – whose imprint on the Romanian mind is acknowledged as most profound of all –, the Turks, the Phanariot Greeks, and even the Russians during their protectorate over the Romanian principalities at the beginning of the XIXth century exerted on the Romanians influences that went against their original frame of mind. And an unlucky history acted in such a way as to make the Romanians an easy pray for all such nefarious influences. While naturally inclined, by virtue of their Latin ancestry, towards the West, they were gradually dragged to the East by the successive waves of invaders, intruders and imperial rulers. When they were on the edge of having their (basically western) identity fully dissolved in the Levantine melting pot, the West unexpectedly intervened and put an end to this (seemingly unending) process of decay. Under the influence of the West, that most conspicuously manifested itself as a French influence, national regeneration started, and it is still underway in Drăghicescu's time. Romanian psychology still bears the scars of the unhappy past, and it is not even by far fully configured. Several decades of western influence stopped the degradation of the national substance but could not decide yet its future positive evolution.

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Which way will it evolve? At a time when the main nationalist leaders had already engaged on the campaign for making the Romanians truer to their own nature, irreducible to any set of values valid for all mankind, Drăghicescu still thinks that only by looking to the achievements of the great nations of the West one can learn the principles of a fertile national pedagogy. Even among these ones, only few have acquired a clear-cut collective psychological profile. And of these, only one can actually be taken as a model. There is nothing comparable, for Drăghicescu, with the harmonious national features of the French, except, perhaps, those of the ancient Romans. The old Latinism is replaced, in Drăghicescu's work, with a no less enthusiastic Francophilia that looks striking if related to the dominant pro-German cultural orientation of the period.

At the time he published this book Dumitru Drăghicescu was already – and unlike Lovinescu and Zeletin – a member of the Liberal Party, and he was to remain a lifelong admirer and fellow-traveler of it. Moreover, after arguing his pro-western case in 1907, Drăghicescu was to come back for a while in the stream of public debate, this time with writings that contain his pro-Liberal case. However, Drăghicescu's Liberal Party apologetics – contained in the two volumes *The Evolution of Liberal Ideas* (1921) and *Political Parties and Social Classes* (1922)[76] – is of a very different nature than the one offered by Lovinescu and Zeletin. Indeed, as his westernizer rhetoric is echoing the national discourse of the fortyeighters, so his political stance is strikingly reminiscent of their corresponding ideas. The political conceptions of Drăghicescu display the same combination of democratic radicalism, confused liberalism, utopian socialism and vague humanitarianism characteristic

[76] D. Drăghicescu, *Evoluția ideilor liberale*, Bucureşti, Imprimeriile "Independența", 1921; Idem, *Partide politice şi clase sociale*, Bucureşti, n. p., 1922.

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of the 1848 period.[77] As such, they have very little in common with the actual policies of the Romanian Liberals. Drăghicescu celebrates the Liberal Party as the artisan of modern Romania and as the inspirer of all generous political projects, culminating with the introduction of universal suffrage and the agrarian reform. Nevertheless, he presents a glorious brief history of the party only to remind his readers that, "after the death of the enthusiastic liberals of 1848, [...] the leaders of the Liberal Party" have generally been "lacking of the sacred flame of generous liberal ideals". By contrast to the great ancestors, "they were moderate persons, essentially bourgeois, for whom the conservative opposition and the resistance met from above" (that is, from the part of the Crown) were "reasons enough to determine them not to tackle, for a long period, the problem of land distribution".[78] What is true about the persistent reluctance of the Liberals to tackle the intricate agrarian issue also applies to many other aspects of their policies. Accordingly, the party has to be rejuvenated, by a re-infusion with the half-forgotten political temper of the 1848 generation: "It is obvious that the Liberal Party needs now an ideal akin, indeed similar to that prevailing in 1848. If we want this party to have a future and to score achievements of the same rank as it did in the past, we must find a new political creed, an ideal suited to our age and aspirations, in the same way as the idea of liberty responded to the expectations of the oppressed masses in 1848".[79]

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77 I. Cojocaru, Z. Ornea, *Falansterul de la Scăieni*, Bucureşti, Ed. Politică, 1966; G. Zane, „Saint-simonism şi fourierism în România" [1970], in *Studii*, ed. de Elena G. Zane, Bucureşti, Eminescu, 1980, pp. 61-81. The same historical realities came later to be presented by inverting the evaluation marks: see, for example, Dan Dionisie, "Socialism, liberalism, utopie, milenarism. O incursiune în ideologia revoluției de la 1848 din Țara Românească", in *Polis. Revistă de ştiințe politice* 5: 1, 1998, pp. 142-158.

78 Drăghicescu, *Evoluția ideilor liberale*, p. 10.

79 *Ibid.*, p. 18.

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The new political creed that Drăghicescu offers to the liberal leaders as constituting both the key to future success and the link to the glorious predecessors is based on a very broad idea of social justice. According to Drăghicescu, "in relation to the no less fundamental principle of liberty, [...] the principle of social justice appears as a logical corrective".[80] As such, it should not be seen as merely a second-rank element of liberal democracy, but as one of its central pillars. This is so because "social justice or equity is virtually identical with democracy. [...] Saying that mankind evolves towards democratization, and saying that it evolves towards the fulfillment of the principle of social justice, is to say one and the same thing in two different ways".[81] All efforts must be made, Drăghicescu maintains, for expanding the welfare policies and for associating the workers unions in the affairs of government. In order to face these new tasks, the ideological outlook of the Liberal Party has to be dramatically updated: "What brought forth the glory and the power of the Liberals in the past was the fact that they were a vanguard party; and the party will not succeed in preserving the same leading position if it becomes a rearguard one".[82] In more precise terms, the "Liberal Party cannot afford to remain simply liberal. The notion of liberty has to be adjusted to the notion of justice. [...] The bourgeois regime is everywhere being transformed into a democratic-social regime. The future belongs neither to bourgeois liberalism, nor to the social-democratic utopia, but to a kind of social liberalism, in which the bourgeoisie will get associated with the industrial proletariat, in order to acquire both the political and the economic leadership of the state. [...] In accordance with an inexorable social evolution, the Liberal Party has to transform itself into a practical socialist party, that is, a liberal-socialist one, something of

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80 Idem, *Partide politice şi clase sociale*, p. 11.
81 *Ibid.,* p. 14.
82 *Ibid.,* pp. 81-82.

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the kind of radical or radical-socialist or social-reformist parties in the West nowadays".[83]

The last sentences sound confusing. As Sanielevici's literary tastes, Drăghicescu's political constructs do no stand the test of time – and were certainly not brilliant even by the standards of his own time and place. And as the former one's enthusiastic pleading for free-trade economics must be evaluated against the circumstances of the time, so the latter's bizarre proposals for social reform and democratization[84] must be appreciated by reference to the general ideological confusion of the age. It may happen that neither Manchesterian economics nor welfare policies – even better conceived than in Drăghicescu's political manifestoes – were easily at the hand of Romania's interwar political establishment. Figures like Sanielevici and Drăghicescu remind us, however, of the need to preserve a principled allegiance to the values of individual freedom and participatory democracy even under the terrible pressures of peripheral modernization. While some of their ideas sound naïve, and certainly so by comparison to the impressive intellectual edifices erected by the great masters of interwar modernism in defense of the rich and powerful of the day, they enable us to take an important insight into the cultural heritage of a country strained between the demands of successful integration with the global modern economy and its corresponding type of civilization, and the demand of complying with basic principles of political morality and public behavior. Under the guise of a vigorous and appealing optimistic belief in the chances of adopting the

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83 *Ibid.*, pp. 83-84.

84 See, however, for the stance of "liberal socialism" in the European thinking of the time: Richard Bellamy, *Liberalism and Modern Society. A Historical Argument*, University Park, Penns., The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992, pp. 152-153; Stanislao G. Pugliese, *Carlo Roselli: Socialist Heretic and Anti-fascist Exile*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1999.

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model proposed by western modernity, Eugen Lovinescu and Ştefan Zeletin have induced us, for a long time, into subscribing to false sociologies of modernization and to wrong assessments of the historical forces at work on the course of Romanian social transformations. Moreover, by convincing us to read Romanian cultural history through their own eyes, as it has too often been done, they prevented our access to any intellectual attitude that could not be ascribed a role on their seductive historical pictures. From behind the canvases on which Lovinescu and Zeletin painted their allegories of progress under the rule of an iron handed political elite, the "anti-oligarchic modernists" of pre-communist Romania can still convey a penetrating message that resonates with our belief that freedom and justice can be defended even against the urgency of catching up with a world historical stream which is ever deepening its terrifying speed.[85]

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[85] A relevant title: Theodore H. von Laue, *The World Revolution of Westernization: the Twentieth Century in Global Perspective*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1987. For sure, the practice of underscoring in this way the difference between the West and the Rest is suspected for dissimulating the cultural patterns of colonialist arrogance and the intellectual patterns of historical metaphysics: see Herbert Butterfield, *The Whig Interpretation of History*, New York, Scribner, 1951 [1931]; Erward Said, *Orientalism. Western Conceptions of the Orient*, London, Penguin Books, 2003 [1978]; Siep Stuurman, "The Canon of the History of Political Thought: Its Critique and a Proposed Alternative", în *History and Theory* 39: 1, 2000, pp. 144-166; Jack Goody, *The Theft of History*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012 [2006].

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7. Historical Canons and Eccentric Voices: a Typological Approach to Romanian Ideological Development

The article outlines an overall typology of ideological patterns in the modern history of Romania, by taking a critical view of mainstream interpretations, both domestic and foreign. It delineates successive departures in the evolution of liberalism, against the established conception about its linear evolution from the beginning of the XIXth century to the interwar period, also identifying intellectual stances and trends of liberal thinking previously neglected by the scholarship in the field. An inventory of left-wing ideological families is accompanied by a search for the various ideological uses Marxist theory performed in pre-communist Romania, when employed as an intellectual instrument most suited to addressing the specific challenges of the social milieu. The right-wing segment of the ideological spectrum is approached retrogressively, by starting from a clarification of the relations between the radical Right,

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corporatism and the traditionalist extreme Right in the interwar period. All throughout, the effort of discovering relevant eccentricities behind canonical interpretative views is conjoined with a consistent attempt to give account of local ideological development on the basis of comparative references.

1. The need for an all-encompassing typology of ideological trends in pre-communist Romania, taken against the background of a critical survey of existing interpretative canons, is long overdue. Only possible at the borderline between the historical and the political science perspectives, this approach could not be taken in the country under communism. Although occurrences of such discipline crossing were not uncommon over the intervening period, no attempt to get a synthetic view of the question was put forward to the present, and the various partial views advanced did not amount to drawing the contours of anything resembling a mainstream or canonical interpretation. Apart from the quite powerful influences on academic writing of some characteristic ideological tendencies connected with the critical departure from communism and its survivals in the public space – that shall be briefly touched upon below –, established views on specific segments of the field did not emerge either. Received scientific wisdom coming from older times – sometimes circulating in the guise of not fully articulated presuppositions – still acts as the baseline for any engagement with the issues involved. Alongside the relevant statements of international academia, it is these older canons that the present paper will mostly consider.

While no systematic survey of the available bibliography can be attempted within the span of a summarizing article of this kind, several clarifications regarding the general characteristics of Romanian scholarship in the field are easy to discern. The topic of the history of local political thought has never become a well-established rubric of institutionalized historical studies in Romania. The only large-scale and influential book written by a professional historian and

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explicitly targeting the subject was published abroad in 1987,[1] in continuation to previous works with the same content coming from the same author.[2] Sustained by a hugely ambitious attempt to chart and classify the whole welter of relevant sources pertaining to the period up to 1878, it cannot be used as either a treatise or a textbook by the general reader, and hardly so by the trained researcher. Moreover, it has the drawback that, while abandoning the Marxist frame – as available at the time in the country – it refrained from adopting or elaborating another set of theoretical and methodological statements recognizable as an interpretative searchlight. Another, strenuously pursued effort of the same kind which can be mentioned alongside that one was meant to obtain a history of medieval and early modern political ideas – as expressed primarily in the chronicles of the XVth-XVIIIth centuries – and it resulted in a series of comprehensive articles.[3] The search for theories and methodologies within ever larger interdisciplinary horizons that followed after communism was hard to boil down to a massive pioneering work able to act as the focus for further debates. A collective enterprise centering upon the "conceptual history" approach has to be mentioned.[4]

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1 Vlad Georgescu, *Istoria ideilor politice româneşti, 1369-1878*, München, Ion Dumitru Verlag, 1987.

2 Idem, *Ideile politice şi iluminismul în Principatele Române, 1750-1831*, Bucureşti, Ed. Academiei R. S. R., 1972.

3 Eugen Stănescu, "Essai sur l'évolution de la pensée politique roumaine dans la literature historique du Moyen Age", in *Nouvelles etudes d'histoire* 2, 1960, pp. 271-304; Idem, "Valoarea istorică şi literară a cronicilor muntene", in *Cronicari munteni*, ed. de Mihail Gregorian, Bucureşti, Ed. pentru Literatură, vol. 1, 1961, pp. V-CXXVI; Idem, "Unity and Diversity in the Political Thought of the Early Romanian Society", in *Nouvelles etudes d'histoire* 4, 1970, pp. 91-110.

4 Victor Neumann, Armin Heinen, coord., *Istoria României prin concepte. Perspective alternative asupra limbajelor social-politice*, Iaşi, Polirom, 2010.

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Historians of pre-communist times were as reluctant as their followers would be to treat the topic under a heading of its own, and one can take for granted, besides, that their statements have to be seen as an integral part of the historical record studied. Precisely for this last reason, it is telling that – as shall be underlined below several times – such pronouncements made their way into later scholarship, contributing decisively to establishing the canonical interpretations. For sure, several works stand out for their effort at objectivity, against prevailing ideological biases, as also for their synthetic accomplishments. One can mention, as pathbreaking, P. P. Panaitescu's studies on selected figures of the traditional culture, partly compiled, later, in one volume,[5] A. D. Xenopol's history of political tendencies on the road to being embodied into the mainstream political parties, in Wallachia and Moldavia, up to 1866,[6] or I. C. Filitti's detailed history of ideological debates in the two countries, over the decade following the end of Phanariot rule.[7] Also belonging to this company are two outstanding works originally published in the years immediately predating the installation of communism – with updated editions later on – and treating the beginnings of modern ideological development in the Principalities (by Andrei Oțetea)[8] and, respectively, in Transylvania (by David Prodan).[9] Still, it could be argued that the very masterpiece

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5 P. P. Panaitescu, *Contribuții la istoria culturii româneşti*, ed. de Silvia Panaitescu şi Dan Zamfirescu, Bucureşti, Minerva, 1971

6 A. D. Xenopol, *Istoria partidelor politice din România până la 1866*, ed. de Constantin Schifirneț, Bucureşti, Albatros, 2005 [1910].

7 I. C. Filitti, "Frămîntările politice şi sociale în Principatele Române de la 1821 la 1828" [1932], in *Opere alese*, ed. de Georgeta Penelea, Bucureşti, Ed. Eminescu, 1985, pp. 61-196.

8 Andrei Oțetea, *Tudor Vladimirescu şi revoluția din 1821*, Bucureşti, Ed. Ştiințifică, 1971 (first version in 1945).

9 David Prodan, *Suplex Libellus Valachorum. Din istoria formării națiunii române*, ed. de Mihai Alin Gherman, Bucureşti, Ed. Enciclopedică, 1998 [1984] (first version in 1948).

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of the subject has never been established as even pertaining to it: this is Gheorghe Brătianu's book about the history of Romanian estates assemblies, from the Middle Ages to 1858, meant at disclosing the precise extent taken, in local traditional society, by these medieval and early modern institutions intended to counterbalance central monarchic power.[10] Written between 1947 and 1950 – as the last word of pre-communist accumulated historical wisdom, which it synthesizes – , but only published abroad in 1976, and then in the country in 1995 (accompanied by an extensive article treating the history of Transylvania with the same focus[11]), its insights have never been harmonized with the rest of the bibliography. It is an argument of the present article that, if attempted, such a harmonization enterprise can only lead to a significant revision of the relevant historical canon.

Once taking into account the scarcity of specialized (synthetic) works coming from within the circle of historiography proper, where is one to search for disclosing the roots of the canons in the history of political thinking and ideologies? There has always been a marked tendency of mistaking the field for that of general cultural history (or, sometimes, for that of literary history). This is certainly misleading. It is also hard to trace the elements of the same canonical interpretations to the specific insights given by specialized scholarship treating the evolution of various disciplinary compartments of the (emerging) social sciences and humanities, as that of historiography itself, but also those of literature, literary studies and philology, of social criticism and sociology, of economics, legal studies,

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10 Gheorghe I. Brătianu, *Sfatul domnesc şi adunarea stărilor în Principatele Române*, ed. de Şerban Papacostea, Bucureşti, Ed. Enciclopedică, 1995 [1976 (1947-1950)].

11 Idem, "Adunările de stări şi românii în Transilvania" [1974-1975 (1947)], in *Adunările de stări în Europa şi în ţările române în Evul Mediu*, ed. de Şerban Papacostea, Bucureşti, Ed. Enciclopedică, 1996, pp. 199-264.

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philosophy or theology. Some such contributions to establishing the mainstream interpretations will be highlighted below, with no attempt at a systematic inventory. It is in order, otherwise, to underscore the heavy mark put on the field by two characteristic approaches. The first is that of the history of intellectuals as a social category, represented by a great array of relevant titles.[12] The second – of still greater importance – is that of the history of ideological currents from a (loosely defined) sociological standpoint. Although never making that standpoint fully explicit and neither underlining its separation from literary history with enough determination, it is this approach that did the most to map the subject and to establish textbook truths about it. No matter how many other authors could be claimed as representatives of it, there are two whose impact on our received wisdom about the ideological dynamics of Romania has been felt, to the present, without ever been entirely acknowledged. One of them engaged systematically with the period stretching from the 1860's to the late 1930's, epitomizing his findings by the means of a staunch opposition between intellectual "traditionalism" and, respectively, "modernism".[13] The other wrote about Transylvania in the second half of the XIXth century.[14]

Besides the fact that it has never employed consistently the typological approach informed by political science theorizing (the works of Gheorghe Brătianu quoted

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[12] Leon Volovici, *Apariția scriitorului în cultura românească*, Iaşi, Junimea, 1976; Virgil Cândea, "Intelectualul sud-est european în secolul al XVII-lea", in *Raționea dominantă. Contribuții la istoria umanismului românesc*, Cluj-Napoca, Dacia, 1979, pp. 225-326; Lucia Boia, *Capcanele istoriei. Elita intelectuală românească între 1930 şi 1950*, Bucureşti, Humanitas, 2011.

[13] Z. Ornea, *Tradiționalism şi modernitate în deceniul al treilea*, Bucureşti, Ed. Eminescu, 1980.

[14] George Em. Marica, *Studii de istoria şi sociologia culturii române ardelene din secolul al XIX-lea*, Cluj-Napoca, Dacia, vols. 1-3, 1977-1980.

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above came closest to this), the scholarship invoked above suffered from always eschewing to tackle the subject in the framework of a (sharply subscribed) distinction between "center" and "periphery". Connected to this, it has never made systematic recourse to an East European comparative perspective, without also being able – and for the same reasons – to perceive Russia as a paradigmatic laboratory of regional and peripheral ideological development – displaying patterns approximated in the region and throughout the non-western world – , and as an irradiating intellectual (peripheral) center comparable – in terms of its influence on the Romanian and other Balkan and East European cultures – to the West itself. In the same way as previous ones by the same author, the present paper is aimed as a contribution to redressing these drawbacks.

Two caveats are in order before proceeding further. First, one must bear in mind that, when speaking about past ideological developments in peripheral contexts – and primarily in the East European one, the oldest of the kind –, a distinction has to be observed between statements pertaining to the field of political argumentation proper – that can be sorted out along the Left-Right axis –, and others dealing with the predicament of modernization on the western model (accompanied by that of nation-building). Specific ideological statements belonging to the first category can get articulated with different ideological stances of the second type, leading to various intellectual structures. As in other respects, Russian history can be invoked heuristically, in a generalizing manner. Occasionally, its intellectual history could be read as strained – and not only at the time of the classical Slavophile controversy – between the opposite attitudes of (universalistic) rationalism and (particularistic) nationalism, with many intermediate positions. As for the Left-Right axis, it was found useful only for being superimposed on the more fundamental one of ideological attitudes towards

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universalistic modernization, and as secondarily relevant for describing particular utterances.[15] Sometimes, the distinction between the two intertwining streams of the ideological dynamics has been drawn in a more sophisticated manner. Thus, the record of interwar East European ideological trends could be conceptualized by placing them along four different axes, of which one – "democracy *vs.* elitism" – can be said to stay for the classic Left-Right opposition, while the remaining three – comparing "secularism" to "non-secular nativist values", then "statist" to "anti-statist economic policies" and, respectively, recipes for "open economies" to those for economic closure – refer, from different standpoints, to the issue of how parties and intellectual groups addressed the demand for social-economic and cultural modernization.[16]

Second, having thus underlined the role of indigenist nationalism as one structuring force stretching through East European ideological development, one must also be aware not to overestimate its influence and not to identify it as the face turned inside down of all projects of modernization, reform or revolution. Once again, Russian intellectual history can be invoked for the sake of clarification. Its manifest long-term sensitivity to the issue of the contextual western origins of legalistic principles formulated in universalistic terms could be described as

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15 Leonard Schapiro, *Rationalism and Nationalism in Russian Nineteenth-century Political Thought*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1967, esp. chpt. 5: "The 'Left' and the 'Right' of Nationalism and Rationalism", pp. 114-142. For comprehensive accounts, see Andrzej Walicki, *A History of Russian Thought from the Enlightenment to Marxism*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1979; William Leatherbarrow, Derek Offord, eds., *A History of Russian Thought*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010.

16 Daniel Chirot, "Ideology, Reality and Competing Models of Development in Eastern Europe between the Two World Wars", in *East European Politics and Societies* 3: 3, 1989, pp. 378-411.

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leading to a deeply ingrained attitude of rejecting legal rationalization from the standpoint of a communitarian conception of political association. Shared by most intellectual currents of both the Left and the Right, this way of thinking was hardly put into question by an always endangered tradition of vindicating the values of the legal state on a liberal basis.[17]

When acknowledging the strength of this anti-Enlightenment intellectual tradition in both western[18] and non-western contexts,[19] it is important to stress that, no matter how paradigmatic for understanding historical evolution throughout the region, Russia has also had sharp specificities, nourished by its very imperial status and international standing, which have put their imprint on its political culture.[20] Accordingly, the present article will contend that Romanian and general East European history cannot be meaningfully interpreted from such a standpoint. A strong temptation of doing precisely that has accompanied, however, the departure from communism, and has come to sustain a great number of approaches to the evolution of Romanian political culture, taken with the hindsight of post-totalitarianism and originated in Romania or abroad.[21] Up

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17 Andrzej Walicki, *Legal Philosophies of Russian Liberalism*, Notre Dame, Ind., The University of Notre Dame Press, 1992 [1987], esp. chpt. 1, "The Tradition of the Censure of Law", pp. 9-104.

18 Stephen Holmes, *The Anatomy of Antiliberalism*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1993.

19 Daniel Chirot, "Modernism without Liberalism: the Ideological Roots of Modern Tyranny", in *Contention* 5: 1, 1995, pp. 141-166.

20 Edward L. Keenan, "Muscovite Political Folkways", in *Russian Review* 45: 2, 1986, pp. 115-181.

21 Cheng Chen, "The Roots of Illiberal Nationalism in Romania. A Historical Institutionalist Analysis of the Leninist Legacy", in *East European Politics and Societies* 17: 2, 2003, pp. 166-201; Umut Korkut, "Nationalim versus Internationalism: the Roles of Political and Cultural Elites in Interwar and Communist Romania", in *Nationalities Papers* 34: 2, 2006, pp. 131-155;

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to a point understandable, the extensive emphasis placed on the episode of Romanian intellectual fascism and its legacies in order to give account of the same purported diffusiveness of anti-modern nationalism across ages has also tended to get overstressed,[22] with distorting results in terms of over-estimating the wider cultural impact of the same intellectual sequence.

Although westernizer nationalism has sometimes been depicted misleadingly as a paradoxical compound,[23] the history of nationalist ideologies displays a long record of – partly illusory – efforts targeted at the harmonization between their tenets and those of Enlightenment universalism. An older scholarly tradition meant at disclosing the scope and influence of such strivings and illusions[24] has recently been reconsidered.[25] This is only a fresh reminder to the central

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Alina Mungiu-Pippidi, "Hijacked Modernization: Romanian Political Culture in the 20th Century", in *Südosteuropa* 55: 1, 2007, pp. 118-144.

22 Vladimir Tismăneanu, Dan Pavel, "Romania's Mystical Revolutionaries: the Generation of Angst and Adventure Revisited", in *East European Politics and Societies* 8: 3, 1994, pp. 402-438; Matei Călinescu, "The 1927 Generation in Romania: Friendships and Ideological Choices (Mihail Sebastian, Mircea Eliade, Nae Ionescu, Eugène Ionesco)", in *East European Politics and Societies* 15: 3, 2001, pp. 649-677.

23 Dale E. Peterson, "Civilizing the Race: Chaadaev and the Paradoxes of Eurocentric Nationalism", in *Russian Review* 56: 4, 1997, pp. 550-563.

24 Hans Kohn *The Idea of Nationalism. A Study in Its Origins and Background*, New York, Macmillan, 1961 [1944]; Ken Wolf, "Hans Kohn's Liberal Nationalism: The Historian as Prophet", in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 37: 4, 1976, pp. 651-672.

25 Iván Zoltán Dénes, ed., *Liberty and the Search for Identity. Liberal Nationalisms and the Legacy of Empires*, Budapest, Central European University Press, 2006; Diana Mishkova, "Liberalism and Tradition in the Nineteenth Century Balkans. Toward History and Methodology of Political Transfer", in *East European Politics and Societies* 26: 4, 2012, pp. 668-692.

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role that modernizing liberalism with a strong commitment to nation building has played in historical settings defined by developmental disparities. Set in continuity to previous ones,[26] the present paper will accordingly proceed by focusing on the canonical interpretations and typology of liberalism, in order to address, then, the varieties and successive departures marking the evolution of left-wing and right-wing ideological orientations in Romania.

2. Romanian and foreign general historical characterizations of Romanian liberalism strangely concurred in underlining its basic homogeneity and defining continuity from the beginning of the XIXth century to the interwar decades. Originally articulated by conservative (*Junimist*) critics of National Liberal Party policies,[27] this view was soon adopted, and further elaborated in Romania by authors meant at advocating the same policies and constructing retrospective defenses for them. Although generally reluctant to adopt such a partisan and apologetic stance in his historical works, the (liberal) historian A. D. Xenopol was the first to offer an influential account of the interconnected growth of the indigenous liberal and conservative trends of thought from the late Phanariot period to 1866, with the underlying implication that both of them, acting as the parties of change and of reaction respectively, continued to develop on the same paths into

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[26] See above, chapter 6.

[27] Theodor Rosetti, "Mişcarea socială la noi", in *Convorbiri literare* 19: 8, 1885, pp. 609-620; 19: 11, 1886, pp. 911-920; Nicolae Iorga, "Partidele politice în România în secolul al XIX-lea", in *Opinii sincere şi perniciose ale unui rău patriot*, ed. şi trad. de Andrei Pippidi, Bucureşti, Humanitas, 2008 [1899, 1900], pp. 187-236; Alexandru Papacostea, "Dezvoltarea ideilor politice în România, în a doua jumătate a veacului XIX" [1916], in *România politică. Doctrină, idei, figuri, 1907-1925*, ed. de Ştefan Zeletin, Bucureşti, Tipografia "Bucovina" I. E. Torouțiu, n. d. [1932], pp. 143-166.

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the XXth century.[28] Writing with a clearer hindsight, the declared Liberal Party apologists of the 1920's, Ştefan Zeletin and Eugen Lovinescu, forcefully rejected all the conservative, traditionalist and agrarian criticisms of the Liberal Party-sponsored modernization under the label of reaction, also applied by them to local socialism on account of the (purportedly) notorious tendency of the latter to criticize capitalism with an eye turned nostalgically to the traditional ways. Vindicating the oligarchic and statist-interventionist policies employed by the Liberal Party (to be mentioned again, below, in connection to their treatment in the international bibliography of the topic) as necessary endowments of accelerated modernization, they also described the ideology and practice of interwar liberalism as the legitimate heirs of early XIXth century "fortyeighter" culture, that had first imported western liberal ideas into the country, in order to respond to underlying social-economic changes (Zeletin) or to set in train such a process of change (Lovinescu).[29]

The historiography of political and social-economic life produced under communism necessarily identified a semblance of discontinuity on the historical trajectory of local liberalism, as it had to distinguish between the early – revolutionary and emancipating – stage in the evolution of the bourgeoisie and of the capitalist mode of production from the latter one, when the forces of capitalism – together with their liberal ideological underpinning – came to play a reactionary role, in confrontation with the working class driven by revolutionary socialism. Interwar liberalism was accordingly most often described with the bleak overtones suited for a set of ideas encompassing a harshly exploitative

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[28] Xenopol, *Istoria partidelor politice*.

[29] Ştefan Zeletin, *Burghezia română. Originea şi rolul său istoric*, ed. de C. D. Zeletin, Bucureşti, Humanitas, 1991 [1925]; Eugen Lovinescu, *Istoria civilizației române moderne*, ed. de Z. Ornea, Bucureşti, Minerva, vols. 1-3, 1992 [1924-1926].

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and irretrievably declining social order.[30] Still, the historical interpretation of Zeletin and Lovinescu – less emphatically that of Xenopol – came to be canonized by the historiography of intellectual life elaborated at the time, which pointed to it as incarnating the spirit of Enlightenment rationalism against traditionalist obscurantism connected with fascism.[31] (Zeletin himself had most clearly set the tone for such a view when contrasting the political and modernizing wisdom of the Romanian liberals to the culture of resistance to change inspired by European Romanticism.[32]) The thesis of continuity across all ages of local liberalism gained ground under the influence of such works, and the same view was further consolidated by historical approaches to the topic of the first beginnings of cultural modernization in the Romanian Principalities through the importation of western Enlightenment ideas.[33] According to the interpretation thus established, after originally acting as the ideology of the boyar class – and focusing on the demand for national emancipation against Phanariot rule[34] – Enlightenment reformist culture was broadened into the revolutionary doctrine of the "fotyeighters",[35] whose legacy was to survive into the later historical stages. An intermediate stage in the process was the discourse of the

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30 Al. Gh. Savu, *Sistemul partidelor politice din România, 1919-1940*, Bucureşti, Ed. Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică, 1976.

31 Ornea, *Tradiţionalism şi modernitate*.

32 Ştefan Zeletin "Romantismul german şi cultura critică română" [1929], in *Neoliberalismul. Studii asupra istoriei şi politicii burgheziei române*, ed. de C. D. Zeletin, Bucureşti, Scripta, 1992 [1927], pp. 55-72.

33 Georgescu, *Ideile politice şi iluminismul*; Paul Cornea, *Originile romantismului românesc. Spiritul public, mişcarea ideilor şi literatura între 1780-1840*, Bucureşti, Cartea Românească, 2008 [1972].

34 Vlad Georgescu, "The Romanian Boyars in the XVIIIth century: Their Political Ideology", in *East European Quarterly* 18: 1, 1974, pp. 31-40.

35 Cornea, *Originile romantismului*.

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lower boyardom or the *cărvunari*, featuring in the first two decades of the XIXth century – particularly in Moldavia – and previously characterized by both Xenopol[36] and Lovinescu[37] – as well as by such other historians of ideas (equally biased ideologically) as the agrarian populist Garabet Ibrăileanu[38] or the traditionalist Radu Dragnea[39] as halfheartedly open to change but similarly oriented towards intellectual innovation as the more radical – particularly Wallachian – currents of change that were to follow. More recent scholarship invoked above subscribed to the classical interpretation in this respect.[40]

When turning to international bibliography (more) informed by a comparative perspective, we see that the Romanian variety of liberalism is depicted as partaking in the basic features of the regional, East European branch. The absence of an entrepreneurial bourgeois class – understood as an underlying prerequisite for the growth and social entrenchment of the doctrine by both the Marxist and the Weberian accounts of the topic[41] –, accompanied by a strong commitment to the cause of nation building from the part of all political groups (itself a regional predicament[42]),

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36 Xenopol, *Istoria partidelor politice*, pp. 81-142.

37 Lovinescu, *Istoria civilizației*, vol. 1: *Forțele revoluționare*, pp. 43-92.

38 Garabet Ibrăileanu, *Spiritul critic în cultura românească*, ed. de Rodica Rotaru şi Alexandru Piru, Chişinău, Litera, 1997 [1909, 1922], pp. 27-44.

39 Radu Dragnea, *Mihail Kogălniceanu*, Bucureşti, n. p., 1926 [1921], pp. 136-164.

40 Cornea, *Originile romantismului*, pp. 169-184.

41 Richard Ashcraft, "Marx and Weber on Liberalism as Bourgeois Ideology", in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 14: 2, 1972, pp. 130-168.

42 Marco Dogo, Guido Franzinetti, eds., *Disrupting and Reshaping: Early Stages of Nation-buiding in the Balkans*, Ravenna, Longo Edittore, 2002; Alex Drace-Francis, *The Making of Modern Romanian Culture. Literacy and the Development of National Identity*, London, Tauris Academic Studies, 2006.

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imparted to local liberalism the defining character of a modernizing ideology prone to chronically favor statist policies to the detriment of the *laissez faire* ideal, narrowing the scope of welfare policies to the benefit of collective national pursuits and allowing a wide space for the mechanisms of oligarchic policies with a clear bent of fake parliamentarism.[43] Gaining very rapidly – after the full establishment of the regime of constitutional monarchy in 1866 – the status of a governmental political force, Romanian liberalism tended to replace lower boyardom with the "bureaucratic class" as the main field of social recruitment.[44] It departed, in this way, from the more aristocratically based Hungarian variety,[45] but also from such regional varieties – like the Russian or the Polish ones – that were confined to the oppositional status for longer periods and therefore shifted from the gentry to the intelligentsia in this respect.[46]

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43 Henry L. Roberts, *Rumania. Political Problems of an Agrarian State*, Hamden, Conn., Archon Books, 1969 [1951], pp. 108-112; Andrew C. Janos, "Modernization and Decay in Historical Perspective: the Case of Romania", in Kenneth Jowitt, ed., *Social Change in Romania, 1860-1940. A Debate on Development in a European Nation*, Berkeley, University of California, Institute of International Studies, 1978, pp. 72-116.

44 Janos, "Modernization and Decay"; Gale Stokes, "The Social Origins of East European Politics", in *East European Politics and Societies* 1: 1, 1986, pp. 30-74.

45 Stokes, "The Social Origins of East European Politics", pp. 41-51; William O. McCagg, "Ennoblement in Dualistic Hungary", in *East European Quarterly* 5: 1, 1971, pp. 13-26. Compare Andrew C. Janos, *The Politics of Backwardness in Hungary*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1982.

46 George Fischer, *Russian Liberalism: from Gentry to Intelligentsia*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1958. Maciej Janowski, *Polish Liberal Thought before 1918*, transl. by Danuta Przekop, Budapest, Central European University Press, 2004, pp. 113-146.

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This overall characterization applying to the East European liberalism generally and to the Romanian case specifically made the object of some attempts at qualification or revision. Thus, the bureaucratic and statist perversion of liberal ideas and policies in the context of delayed modernization could be described as just the local manifestations of the generic "sectarian liberalism" emerging in the West in the last decades of the XIXth century, as a narrow class ideology of the upper bourgeoisie, following the moment when fundamental liberal principles had gained virtual universal acceptance across all parts of the political spectrum.[47] Also, the primacy of the nationalist commitment over genuine liberal concerns – already in place at the middle of the XIXth century – could be reinterpreted as less of an original evil inescapably propelling peripheral liberalism on a perverted path of development than as the core of the ideological compound of "liberal nationalism", with a quasi-universal spreading – although marked by significant variations – at the time, acting as a legitimate heir to the universalistic Enlightenment project[48] and resurrected at the close of the XXth century by schools of political thought in both the West and in Eastern Europe.[49]

Not even such qualifications put into question, however, the conception of the basic continuity of Romanian

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47 Victoria F. Brown, "The Adaptation of a Western Political Theory in a Peripheral State: The Case of Romanian Liberalism", in Stephen Fischer-Galati et al., eds., *Romania between East and West*, Boulder, Colo., East European Monographs, 1982, pp. 269-301, relying on Carlton J. H. Hayes, *A Generation of Materialism*, New York, Harper, 1941.

48 Dénes, ed., *Liberty and the Search for Identity*. Compare Maciej Janowski, "Wavering Friendships: Liberal and National Ideas in Nineteenth-century East-Central Europe", in *Ab Imperio* 3-4, 2000, pp. 69-90.

49 Yael Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1993; G. M. Tamás, "Ethnarchy and Ethnoanarchism", in *Social Research* 63: 1, 1996, pp. 147-190.

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liberalism across the whole period of pre-communist modernization. Indeed, while older works focusing on the decades when the liberal creed was articulated as an oppositional discourse underscore its contribution to nation building, without asking the question of whether and how the same discourse was transformed after the first stage of the process was completed, in the 1860's,[50] recent revisionist works are explicit in emphasizing that fortyeighter liberalism was streamlined on a statist path of evolution leading to the interwar interventionist economic policies.[51] However, a deeper survey of the recent theoretical and comparative bibliography of liberalism and of its East European varieties can enable us to dissent from the continuity thesis and identify successive departures in the evolution of the leading modernizing Romanian ideology.

3. Treated historically over the widest span of time and at its most general, liberalism could be seen as the defining core of western modernity. Its conception of freedom under the rule of law only offered a new theoretical solution to the problem of maintaining society as autonomous from the state and endowing it with the means to oppose the despotic tendencies of political power. Such a concern, alien to ancient, Greek-Roman political thought, underlined the conflictual church-state relations in the western Middle Ages. The split of the western Christendom in the XVIth century left society without an institution and a doctrine strong enough to perform the function of protecting its separateness and, in the context of the religious wars ensuing from this, states threatened to expand prodigiously at the expense of autonomous social life. It was liberalism,

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50 John C. Campbell, *French Influence and the Rise of Roumanian Nationalism. The Generation of 1848*, New York, Arno Press, 1971 [1940].

51 Mishkova, "The Interesting Anomaly of Balkan Liberalism", in Dénes, ed., *Liberty and the Search for Identity*, pp. 399-456.

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hence, which renewed western dualism in a secular guise.[52] It can be seen, thus, as just another name for the mature stage of that surge to political pluralism which originated in the West with the church-state dualism and eventually acted as the engine for western expansionist energies and imperialist power.[53]

While the view of the centrality of liberalism to the rise of the West is basically accepted by recent critiques of the imperialistically self-serving and ideologically biased grand narrative of modernization,[54] one must refrain from employing it in a reductionist way. The foundations of western exceptionalism were deep, wide and intricate, and the origins of western propensity to pluralism has to be searched for much beyond the implications of church-state (or state-society) theoretical dualism, by taking into consideration such factors as the specific type of parcellization of power in the frame of medieval feudalism – including the inner contractualist dimension of the latter, which bestowed a long-term legacy on western political culture and social practices[55] –, the

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52 Frederick Watkins, *The Political Tradition of the West: a Study in the Development of Modern Liberalism*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1962 [1948], pp. 31-89.

53 John A. Hall, *Powers and Liberties. The Causes and Consequences of the Rise of the West*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1985.

54 Siep Stuurman, "The Canon of the History of Political Thought: Its Critique and a Proposed Alternative", in *History and Theory* 39: 2, 2000, pp. 147-166; Jack Goody, *The Theft of History*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012 [2006], esp. pp. 240-266.

55 Jenő Szűcs, "The Three Historical Regions of Europe", in *Acta Historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 29: 2-4, 1983, pp. 131-184; Ivan Berend, "The Historical Evolution of Eastern Europe as a Region", in Ellen Comisso, Laura D'Andrea Tyson, eds., *Power, Purpose and Colective Choice. Economic Strategy in Socialist States*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1986, pp. 153-170; Gianfranco Poggi, "Max Weber's Conceptual Portrait of Feudalism", in *The British Journal of Sociology* 39: 2, 1988, pp. 211-227.

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specific type of urban autonomy developing in the West after the year 1000[56] and the interplay between bureaucratic rationalization and the rise of capitalist economy starting with the XVIth century.[57] Liberalism capitalized on this entire historical evolution, and the geography of its varieties was accordingly dependent on the whole morphology of the lags of development and on their long-term implications. They were most acutely dependent on the differences between political traditions emanating from the medieval and early modern prevalence of feudalism – in the West and (in a truncated form) in the areas of Central and East-Central Europe[58] – and, respectively, from that of the patrimonial type of monarchic government, in Russia and the Ottoman Empire.[59] In the same way as that of the forms of Enlightenment thinking, the span of its varieties, from West to East, were rooted in specific social circumstances and cultural environments.[60]

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56 Daniel Chirot, "The Rise of the West", in *American Sociological Review* 50: 2, 1985, pp. 181-195; George Schöpflin, "The Political Traditions of Eastern Europe", in Stephen R. Graubard, ed., *Eastern Europe...Central Europe...Europe*, Boulder, Colo., Westview Press, 1991, pp. 59-94.

57 N. Birnbaum, "Conflicting Interpretations of the Rise of Capitalism: Marx and Weber", in *The British Journal of Sociology* 4: 2, 1953, pp. 125-141; Michael Hechter, "Lineages of the Capitalist State", in *The American Journal of Sociology* 85: 2, 1977, pp. 1057-1074.

58 Szűcs, "The Three Historical Regions of Europe".

59 Vatro Murvar, "Patrimonial-Feudal Dichotomy and Political Structure in Pre-revolutionary Russia: One Aspect of the Dialogue between the Ghost of Marx and Weber", in *The Sociological Quarterly* 12: 4, 1971, pp. 500-524; Serif Mardin, "Power, Civil Society and Culture in the Ottoman Empire", in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 11: 3, 1969, pp. 258-281.

60 Paschalis M. Kitromilides, "The Enlightenment East and West: a Comparative Perspective on the Ideological Origins of the Balkan Political Traditions", in *Enlightenment, Nationalism,*

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As a XIXth century trend of thought – no matter how constitutive to the functioning of modern political life generally, and to the presuppositions of all political ideologies[61] –, liberalism emerged at the interplay between various processes of change, and by confrontation to other intellectual currents. An older historical account described it as the end product of a dynamic of political development marked, first, by the tradition of estates freedom with medieval origins, and then by the bureaucratic structuring of the state and its separation from the social order, at the time of absolutism.[62] For long, modern freedom centered upon securing individual rights against collective pursuits has been contrasted favorably to the tradition of ancient freedom based on the idea of self-government through political participation.[63] Over the past several decades, the republican tradition celebrating civic virtue against individualistic selfishness has been vindicated theoretically[64] and reconsidered historically at great length.[65] Accordingly, the modern

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Orthodoxy. Studies in the Culture and Political Thought of South-Eastern Europe, Aldershot, Variorum, 1994, pp. 51-70.

61 Watkins, *The Political Tradition of the West*, pp. 238-270.

62 Guido de Ruggiero, *A History of European Liberalism*, transl. by R. G. Collingwood, Boston, Beacon Press, 1961 [1927], pp. 1-13; Dieter Langewiesche, *Liberalism in Germany*, transl. by Christiane Banerji, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2000, pp. 1-27.

63 J. L. Talmon, *The Rise of Totalitarian Democracy*, Boston, Beacon Press, 1952; Isaiah Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty", in *Four Essays on Liberty*, London, Oxford University Press, 1969, pp. 118-165.

64 Quentin Skinner, "The Republican Ideal of Political Liberty", in Gisela Bock et al., eds., *Machiavelli and Republicanism*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp. 293-309; Philip Pettit, *Republicanism: a Theory of Freedom and Government*, Oxford, Claredon Press, 1997.

65 J. G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1975; Quentin Skinner, *Liberty before Liberalism*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998; Maurizio Viroli, *Republicanism*, transl. by Antony Shugaar, New York, Hill and Wang, 2002.

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political landscape has come to be understood as shaped – over the early modern centuries and up to the period of the American and French revolutions – by the interconnected streams of (proto-)liberalism and republicanism,[66] and the survivals of the latter into the XIXth century have been underscored – by disclosing them in the texture of socialist thought, alongside the democratic radicalism of the time[67] – to the same extent as the departures taken from within its fold towards the stream of liberal conservatism.[68] A reconsideration of radical Enlightenment – together with its republican modes of political thought (including the Jacobin one) – against its moderate counterpart was put forward accordingly.[69]

Political regimes predicated upon the entrenched power of the estates and, respectively, absolutist governments din not arise, in the countries of Eastern Europe, as successive stages of political evolution produced by endogenous social developments. The very feeble representative bodies of the boyardom were curtailed by Russian autocracy in the XVIth century, such that later on absolutism reigned supreme, without encountering any resistance from the part of estate assemblies.[70] In neighboring Poland, the opposite situation

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66 Joyce O. Appleby, *Liberalism and Republicanism in Historical Imagination*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1992.

67 Gregory Claeys, "The Origins of the Rights of Labor: Republicanism, Commerce and the Construction of Modern Social Theory in Britain, 1796-1805", in *The Journal of Modern History* 66: 2, 1994, pp. 249-290.

68 Andreas Kalyvas, Ira Katzenelson, "Embracing Liberalism: Germaine de Staël's Farewell to Republicanism", in Paschalis M. Kitromilides, ed., *From Republican Polity to National Community: Reconsiderations of Enlightenment Political Thought*, Oxford, Voltaire Foundation, 2003, pp. 167-190.

69 Jonathan I. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment. Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650-1750*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2001.

70 Richard Pipes, *Russian Conservatism and Its Critics. A Study in Political Culture*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2005, pp. 1-26. See, for a mild qualification, Daniel Rowland, "Did Muscovite Literary

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prevailed, with the monarchy placed on an elective basis in 1572, and political power vested almost entirely in the *Sejm*, in the framework of an aristocratic republic.[71] Later on, once aristocratic anarchy revealed its tremendous negative consequences leading to state atrophy and territorial partition among surrounding absolutist empires, institutional rationalization taking a leaf from the centralist model was attempted at an accelerated pace, with a search for mingling the two types of government on the basis of a constitution sealed by Enlightenment principles.[72] Although disintegration at the hands of foreign imperialism could not be halted, bureaucratization proceeded further, hand in hand with the partial disentrancement of estates power, in the framework of the Napoleonic Duchy of Warsaw, between 1807 and 1815.[73] In XVIIIth century Hungary, local estates came to confront Habsburg absolutism prone to expand at their expense,[74] while in the Romanian Principalities the XVIIth century "boyar state"[75] was followed by the absolutist experiments of the Phanariot princes imposed by the Ottoman Empire. Western intellectual influences got articulated with these various local institutional arrangements, in order to give rise to specific ideological constructs. The

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Ideology Place Limits to the Power of the Tsar (1540's-1660's)?", in *Russian Review* 49: 2, 1990, 125-155.

71 Anna Grześkowiak-Krwawikz, "Anti-monarchism in Polish Republicanism in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries", in Martin van Gelderen, Quentin Skinner, eds., *Republicanism. A Shared European Heritage*, vol. 1: *Republicanism and Constitutionalism in Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. 43-60.

72 Jerzy Lukowski, "Recasting Utopia: Montesquieu, Rousseau and the Polish Constitution of 3 May 1791", in *The Historical Journal* 37: 1, 1994, pp. 65-87.

73 Janowski, *Polish Liberal Thought before 1918*, pp. 19-32.

74 Janos, *The Politics of Backwardness in Hungary*, pp. 16-26; Iván Zoltán Dénes, "The Value Systems of Liberals and Conservatives in Hungary, 1830-1848", in *The Historical Journal* 36: 4, 1993, pp. 825-850.

75 Stănescu, "Valoarea istorică şi literară a cronicilor muntene".

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message of the moderate Enlightenment came to nourish the enterprises of paternalist modernization carried over by enlightened absolutism, acting either as a domestic force or in an imperial guise. The republican view of radical Enlightenment challenged, at various degrees in different places, this mainstream ideological orientation.

The legacies of estates government – either real or (largely) imagined retrospectively – compounded, in some places, the relation between the two strands of thought. In Poland, where a strong tradition of civic humanism went back to Renaissance times, the Commonwealth of the nobility was enmeshed very early in the discourse of republicanism,[76] much in the same way as the same discourse – originally tailored to the political life of Italian city-states – was applied to parliamentary politics in the context of the English Puritan Revolution, and in the larger one of the Anglo-American world all throughout the XVIIth and the XVIIIth centuries.[77] In the early XIXth century, a process of reimagining the history of indigenous political tradition unfolded on the basis of a fusion between emerging liberalism and Romantic nationalism, with an old Polish or "Sarmatian" conception of liberty discovered at the very roots of national development and eventually interpreted by such authors as Joachim Lelewel or Adam Mickiewicz as a diffuse feature of old Slavic society.[78] The Decembrist strand

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[76] Edward Opaliński, "Civic Humanism and Republican Citizenship in the Polish Renaissance", in Martin van Gelderen, Quentin Skinner, eds., *Republicanism. A Shared European Heritage*, vol. 1: *Republicanism and Constitutionalism in Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. 147-166.

[77] Skinner, *Liberty before Liberalism*. See also Caroline Robbins, *The Eighteenth Century Commonwealthman*, Indianapolis, Liberty Fund, 2004 [1959].

[78] Jerzy Jedlicki, *A Suburb of Europe: Nineteenth-century Polish Approaches to Western Civilization*, Budapest, Central European University Press, 1999, p. 26-27, 33.

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of liberalism in early XIXth century Russia similarly invented a tradition of communal self-government projected backwards to the Kievan, pre-Mongol times, with scattered pockets of surviving freedom disclosed in the political landscape of the following centuries, up to the imposition of strict Muscovite rule in the XVIth century.[79] While much less favorable to radical ideas, and accordingly less prone to indulge in retrospective utopias highlighting golden ages of political liberty, Hungarian liberalism also pointed out, occasionally, to the Early Modern institutions of the provincial assemblies as repositories of a political wisdom appropriate for being resurrected in order to support its struggles against the Habsburg order and the conservatives, carried under the ideal of extending noble privileges to the whole of the social body.[80] The neo-Hellenic late Enlightenment and early liberalism was sharply divided between a dominant ideology of enlightened absolutism and a minority republican discourse.[81] With a "third estate" social basis and lacking a tradition of aristocratic politics behind it, the modernizing ideological trend nevertheless started by elaborating its political projects by reference to a territorial frame recalling the memory of the Byzantine Empire.[82]

Taking advantage of such comparative references to the force of the estates tradition in Eastern Europe at the

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79 Adrzej Walicki, "Russian Social Thought: an Introduction to the Intellectual History of Nineteenth-century Russia", in *Russian Review* 36: 1, 1977, pp. 3-4.

80 Dénes, "The Value Systems of Liberals and Conservatives in Hungary", p. 831.

81 Raphael Demos, "The Neo-Hellenic Enlightenment", in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 19: 4, 1958, pp. 523-541; Paschalis M. Kitromilides, *The Enlightenment as Social Criticism. Iosipos Moisiodax and Greek Culture in the Eighteenth Century*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1992, pp. 167-182.

82 Paschalis M. Kitromilides, "An Enlightenment Perspective on Balkan Cultural Pluralism: the Republican Vision of Rhigas Velestinlis", in *History of Political Thought* 24: 3, 2003, pp. 465-479.

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turn of the XVIIIth to the XIXth centuries – either by its living institutional survivals or by the influence of its (invented) memory – one can identify two successive departures in the early evolution of Romanian liberalism, that have to be set against the prevailing view of its linear growth from inside the welter of Enlightenment imported ideas. Read from this newly acquired perspective, Gheorghe Brătianu's work meant to ponder the scope and influence of the estates assemblies in Romanian traditional society emerges as a major contribution to the history of political ideas, which has hitherto never been considered in the bibliography of the question, staying at odds, moreover, with the main trust of the historical canon. Without ever explicitly taking issue with this canonical view, Brătianu treats western intellectual influences as of lesser importance, in terms of their contribution to the unfolding of ideological debate in the principalities up to the early 1820's, than internal historical references, with their underlying symbolism. When approached in this light, the *cărvunari* discourse of the lower boyardom emerges – against the established view – not as the first stage of fortyeighter culture, but as the last prominent manifestation of a type of political thinking focused upon the virtues of the old regime arrangements and meant at refurbishing them after an intervening age of decline and corruption.[83]

The baseline for the first stage of modern Romanian ideological development was set by the Phanariot reforms of the 1740's, when prince Constantin Mavrocordat introduced a sharp separation – predicated upon the criterion of office-holding –, between the higher *protipendada* boyardom and the lesser echelons of the same boyar class.[84] A Romanian

[83] Compare J. G. A. Pocock, *The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1957.

[84] Gheorghe I. Brătianu, "Două veacuri de la reforma lui Constantin Mavrocordat" [1946], in *Adunările de stări în Europa*

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gentry ideology arose accordingly, alongside a discourse of the magnate nobility, in this social and institutional framework. Both discourses were characteristically expressed by "projects of reform" addressed to foreign courts (most often the Habsburg and Russian ones).[85] They were, moreover, sustained by the same anti-Phanariot stance, rejecting princely despotism of alien origins in the name of boyar privileges rooted in the indigenous estates customs and institutions. However, while the latter one defended local ways against pernicious absolutist innovations by invoking the sacrosanct authority of the "Mavrocordat constitution", the first one did the same by looking beyond that historical layer, to the pre-Phanariot, XVIIth century age of the "boyar state", when the estates had enjoyed their most powerful influence, in conjunction with a larger membership.[86] Calling for a resurrection of the state of estates in its genuine, non-corrupted form, the *cărvunari* ardently demanded the broadening of existing political arrangements, to be accomplished primarily by their own enfranchisement as members with full rights of the system of corporate privileges.[87] Occasionally, as in the case of the 1802 project for an "aristocratic-democratic republic" designed by Dumitrache Sturdza – which ruled out the princely office entirely, providing instead for a three chambers assembly, with the lower chamber including members from among the non-privileged population[88] –, or

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şi ţările române în Evul Mediu, ed. de Şerban Papacostea, Bucureşti, Ed. Enciclopedică, 1996, pp. 265-290.

85 Brătianu, *Sfatul domnesc şi adunarea stărilor*, pp. 185-210; Georgescu, *Ideile politice şi iluminismul*.

86 Brătianu, *Sfatul domnesc şi adunarea stărilor*, pp. 222; Stănescu, "Valoarea istorică şi literară a cronicilor muntene".

87 Brătianu, *Sfatul domnesc şi adunarea stărilor*, pp. 234-235.

88 *Ibid.*, pp. 211-213. See also E. Vîrtosu, *Napoleon Bonaparte şi proiectul unei "republici aristo-democraticeşti" în Moldova la 1802*, Bucureşti, n. p., 1946; Georgescu, *Istoria ideilor politice româneşti*, p. 148; Valeriu Şotropa, *Proiectele de constituţie,*

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in the still more conspicuous one of the project for a "*cărvunari* constitution" of 1822, designed by Ionică Tăutu,[89] such claims for the reinstatement of full-blown estates government were tainted by strong influences of republican-Jacobin political thought coming from the West. One must beware of mistaking – as it has repeatedly been done before[90] – such foreign intellectual additions to the gentry discourse for its core ideas, focused as they were not on the enterprise of modernization and democratization by the means of ideological imports but on the eagerness to remove the foreign corruptive influences of bureaucratic absolutism from over the indigenous institutions of boyar rule. As late as 1839, the political project of Leonte Radu shows strange reminiscences of gentry constitutional thinking (and it was rightly ascribed by Lovinescu to *cărvunărism* on account of its reluctant liberalism[91]), due to its exotic and singular proposal of reinforcing the boyar status on the basis of a hierarchy of aristocratic titles of western provenance.[92]

At one moment – the 1821 revolt led by Tudor Vladimirescu in Wallachia, with an impact in the neighboring principality,

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programele de reforme şi petiţiile de drepturi din ţările române în secolul al XVIII-lea şi prima jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea, Bucureşti, Ed. Academiei R. S. R., 1976, pp. 41-44.

89 Full text in Xenopol, *Istoria partidelor politice*, pp. 559-586. See also Brătianu, *Sfatul domnesc şi adunarea stărilor*, pp. 222-238; Ionică Tăutul, *Scrieri social-politice*, ed. de E. Vîrtosu, Bucureşti, Ed. Ştiinţifică, 1974.

90 Most extensively in D. V. Barnoschi, *Originile democraţiei române. "Cărvunarii". Constituţia Moldovei de la 1822*, Iaşi, "Viaţa Românească", 1922. See also Cornea, *Originile romantismului*, pp. 169-184; Georgescu, "The Romanian Boyars in the XVIIIth century".

91 Lovinescu, *Istoria civilizaţiei*, vol. 1 : *Forţele revoluţionare*, pp. 59-60.

92 "Mémoire pour toutes les violations des lois et tous les abus qui se commettent en Moldavie depuis l'introduction des nouvelles institutions", in Vlad Georgescu, dir., *Mémoires et projets de réforme dans les Principautés Roumaines*, vol. 2: *1831-1848*, Bucarest, Association Internationale d'Études du Sud-Est Européen, 1972, pp. 113-136; Georgescu, *Istoria ideilor politice româneşti*, p. 94.

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started in conjunction with the Greek anti-Ottoman war of liberation but rapidly separated from it and propelled on a national path –, political discourse adopted radical overtones coming from the popular revolutionary culture mushrooming at the grass-roots level of Balkan society,[93] and itself nourished by a multifaceted intercourse with the West.[94] Outbursts of radicalism were few in Romanian lands at the time, however. Comparative works have underlined both the small resonance of local society to the Balkan tradition of popular rebelliousness[95] – in spite of the fact that the regional *hajduk* culture did make some inroads into the Romanian peasant world[96] – and the feebleness of the Romanian expressions of radical Enlightenment and republican thinking, by comparison to the other South-East European countries.[97] Related to the Balkans by virtue of their cultural makeup, the Principalities were blatantly similar to Russia, Poland and Hungary in terms of their social structure, featuring a strong landholding class – mostly of native origins – with unbroken continuity across the centuries of Ottoman domination.[98] Deep seated ideological conservatism went together with the inherent conservatism of the social order.

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93 Oțetea, *Tudor Vladimirescu*; Traian Stoianovich, "The Social Foundations of Balkan Politics, 1750-1941", in Charles Jelavich, Barbara Jelavich, eds., *The Balkans in Transition*, Hamden, Conn., Archon Books, 1974 [1963], pp. 297-345; Paschalis M. Kitromilides, "'Balkan Mentality': History, Legend, Imagination", in *Nations and Nationalism* 2: 2, 1996, pp. 163-191.

94 Traian Stoianovich, "The Conquering Balkan Orthodox Merchant", in *The Journal of Economic History* 20: 2, 1960, pp. 234-313.

95 Stoianovich, "The Social Foundations of Balkan Politics".

96 Dimitrije Djordjevic, Stepfen Fischer-Galati, *The Balkan Revolutionary Tradition*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1981. Compare Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels*, New York, Norton, 1965 [1959], pp. 13-29.

97 Kitromilides, "The Enlightenment East and West".

98 *Ibid.*; Stokes, "The Social Origins of East European Politics".

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4. No matter the structural differences between Russia, (East-)Central Europe and the Balkans, the democratic commitment of XIXth century liberalism tended to take a descending slope in all the three East European sub-regions. Thus, in the Greek world, a social structure displaying a stronger emergent middle class already at the beginning of the XIXth century[99] offered the prerequisites for a more radical departure of political thought. Still, liberalism consummated, here, its populist and democratic energies soon thereafter during the century, relapsing into authoritarian politics, militarism and clientelism predicated on the demands of nation building and national aggrandizement.[100] Following the failure of the Decembrist rising in 1825, Russian liberalism abandoned its original revolutionary stance.[101] After an eclipse of political pleading in favor of philosophical speculation, during the 1830's and the 1840's, when Russian intellectual circles were absorbed primarily by the dilemmas of national self-definition and of the relation to the West, in terms of the Hegelian view of history,[102] liberalism reemerged – by gradual disentanglement from Hegelianism – in a conservative guise, embodied in the isolated figure of Boris Chicherin.[103] Although leaning

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99 Stoianovich, "The Social Foundations of Balkan Politics"; Daniel Chirot, Karen Barkey, "States in Search of Legitimacy. Was There Nationalism in the Balkans of the Early Nineteenth Century?", in *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 24: 1-2, 1983, pp. 30-46.

100 Kitromilides, "The Enlightenment East and West"; Ioannis Tassopoulos, "The Experiment of Inclusive Constitutionalism, 1909-1932", in Paschalis M. Kitromilides, ed., *Eleftherios Venizelos: the Trials of Statesmanship*, Edinburg, Edinburg University Press, 2006, pp. 251-272.

101 Walicki, "Russian Social Thought", pp. 5-6.

102 Ana Siljak, "Between East and West: Hegel and the Origins of the Russian Dilemma", in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 62: 2, 2001, pp. 335-358.

103 Walicki, *Legal Philosophies of Russian Liberalism*, pp. 105-164; Gary M. Hamburg, "Peasant Emancipation and Russian Social

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gradually towards embracing social concerns (we shall come back to this below), it would never recover a radical temper.[104] Hungarian liberalism reached the zenith of its radical-democratic discourse at the time of the 1848 revolution, in order to narrow its vision and get into a virtual symbiosis with its conservative rival after the compromise of 1867 with the Habsburg court, on the platform of nation building in a multinational setting.[105] Polish liberalism disentangled from its fusion with Romantic national messianism and, after the failure of the 1863 anti-Russian uprising, put into brackets political activism for the goal of national liberation, turned enthusiastically to the European sources of positivist culture meant to sustain "organic work" in the service of modernization and subscribed to the tenets of the classical doctrine of the contemporary West, as exposed by John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer.[106] In the 1880's, however, it lost ground very rapidly to the rival political orientations of "national democracy" and socialism.[107] Squeezed between the two contending camps, it would never reemerge as a determining voice in the public space up until after the fall of communism.[108]

Thought: the Case of Boris N. Chicherin", in *Slavic Review* 50: 4, 1991, pp. 890-904.

[104] Schapiro, *Rationalism and Nationalism in Russian Nineteenth-century Political Thought*, pp. 143-169.

[105] Janos, *The Politics of Backwardness in Hungary*, pp. 96-105; Dénes, "The Value Systems of Liberals and Conservatives in Hungary", p. 848-850.

[106] Janowski, *Polish Liberal Thought before 1918*, pp. 147-188; Brian A. Porter, "The Social Nation and Its Futures: English Liberalism and Polish Nationalism in Late Nineteenth-century Warsaw", in *American Historical Review* 101: 5, 1996, pp. 1470-1492.

[107] Brian A. Porter, "Democracy and Discipline in Late Nineteenth-century Poland", in *The Journal of Modern History* 71: 2, 1999, pp. 346-393.

[108] Jerzy Szacki, *Liberalism after Communism*, transl. by Chester A. Kisiel, Budapest, Central European University Press, 1995, pp. 43-72.

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The only significant exceptions to the rule of the shift to the Right suffered by East European liberalism under the combined pressures of retarded modernization and delayed nation building are offered by the cases of Serbian and Bulgarian ideological development. After a characteristic flirtation with Romantic-Slavophile ideas during the age of the 1848 revolution, as also after performing its mission of bringing to the country the basic ideas of parliamentary constitutionalism, Serbian liberalism was superseded from the Left, in the 1870's, by an ideology of radicalism equally indebted to the anti-Romantic, positivistic and scientist culture prevalent in western Europe in the second half of the XIXth century and to the Russian populist vision, which relied on the design of an advancement towards socialism on the basis of peasant communalism.[109] Transformed into a political party in 1881, this brand of radicalism would survive as the dominant ideological voice in Serbia (and in Serbian-dominated interwar Yugoslavia), over the following decades,[110] facing challenges from parties and ideologies placed farther to the Left and acting under democratic, agrarian, and communist banners.[111] Put in train at a latter moment, Bulgarian ideological evolution followed a trajectory closely resembling the Serbian one.[112]

Once again, it is in the light of this more elaborate comparative view that we can grasp the contours of the second stage in the history of Romanian liberal ideology.

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[109] Traian Stoianovich, "The Pattern of Serbian Intellectual Evolution, 1830-1880", in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 1: 3, 1959, pp. 242-272.

[110] Gale Stokes, *Politics as Development. The Emergence of Political Parties in Nineteenth-century Serbia*, Durham, Duke University Press, 1990, pp. 291-306.

[111] Joseph Rothschild, *East Central Europe between the Two World Wars*, Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1974, pp. 204-213.

[112] Richard J. Crampton, *Bulgaria, 1878-1918. A History*, Boulder, Colo., East European Monographs, 1983, pp. 325-347; Rothschild, *East Central Europe between the Two World Wars*, pp. 333-353.

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The departure of fortyeighter liberalism from the gentry discourse of the *cărvunari* took place on three interconnected lines. First, contemporary western world replaced the traditional institutions of the old regime as the main reference for evaluating contemporary local society, and was adopted as an inescapable standard for measuring its low performance and indicting its ills. This change of emphasis appears as already definitive in Dinicu Golescu's travel account of 1826, imbued with unqualified admiration for western achievements.[113] The drive to the West – the other side of the drive to evade from the Balkans, which has mistakenly came to be considered, recently, as somehow more important than it[114] – would then continue unimpaired up until the end of the century.

Second, although maintained and further expanded, the tendency of reimagining the past for the purpose of criticizing the present was itself greatly readjusted. Subordinated to the privileged comparison with the much more conspicuous European brilliance of the time, it was practiced, now, in conjunction to the last one. Past arrangements came to be seen as worth mentioning in so far as they could contribute to the rejuvenation of society in accordance with the western model. Furthermore, a new historical reference was found in the midst of the national past, suited for a new kind of reformist advocacy: going beyond the age of the XVIIth century "boyar states" – targeted by the *cărvunari* discourse as best incorporating the wisdom of mixed government – , the new brand of ideological history discovered the golden age of Romanian

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[113] Dinicu Golescu, *Însemnare a călătoriei mele*, ed. de D. Panaitescu-Perpessicius, Bucureşti, Ed. de Stat pentru Literatură şi Artă, 1952 [1826].

[114] Sorin Antohi, "Romania and the Balkans: from Geocultural Bovarism to Ethnic Onthology", in *Tr@nsit-Virtuelles Forum* 21, 2002, pp. 1-31. Compare Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, sec. ed., Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009, pp. 46-49.

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society in the princely dominated medieval states predating the growth of boyar power, as also the imposition of tight Ottoman domination and the Greek infiltration later formalized as Phanariot rule. Much in the same way as the old Slavic institutions of communal self-government invoked by the Russian Decembrists, the Polish Romantic liberals and the Serbian radicals as encapsulating a propensity to political freedom taking ahead to that of the West itself, medieval Wallachia and Moldavia came to be depicted as quasi-egalitarian societies of (mostly) propertied peasants non-subjected to exploitation on boyar domains and ready to give military support to strongly centralized states. Accordingly, princely rule of the primeval times was seen as paternalistic and exercised with the help of a boyardom of warriors and office-holders. This historical account sustaining democratic prophecy came full-blown in an 1846 article by Nicolae Bălcescu,[115] in order to get a large-scale expression in his posthumous unfinished history of the Wallachian late XVIth century prince Michael the Brave.[116]

Third, the older advocacy for enlarged noble parliamentarism is replaced by a growing perception of the political system as marred at its roots by deeply unjust social arrangements. Accordingly, social criticism with populist overtones, targeting the boyar class as a parasitic oligarchy and pleading the cause of peasant liberation from feudal economic exploitation emerges as the favorite expression of democratic radicalism. Inaugurated by gentry figures and occasionally promoted by members of the upper boyardom – like Golescu himself – before being taken over, increasingly, by intelligentsia figures of non-noble origins,

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[115] Nicolae Bălcescu, "Despre starea socială a muncitorilor plugari în Principatele Române în deosebite timpuri" [1846], in *Opere*, ed. de G. Zane şi Elena G. Zane, Bucureşti, Ed. Academiei R. S. R., vol. 1, 1974, pp. 156-157.

[116] Idem, *Românii supt Mihai-Voievod Viteazul*, ed. de G. C. Nicolescu, Bucureşti, Minerva, 1970 [1861-1863], pp. 19-30.

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this discourse gains ground among oppositional circles after the *protipendada* is reentrenched in power – following a brief eclipse between 1822 and 1827[117] –, with its supremacy supported by the Russian protectorate, formalized by the Organic Statutes imposed by Russia in 1831 and enhanced by the commercialized agriculture developing after 1829 and favoring the large boyar domains. Animated by a vision of social harmonization above class struggle and taking inspiration from pre-Marxist socialism,[118] the ideology of fortyeighter liberalism – epitomized by the Wallachian constitutional project of 1848[119] – nevertheless vacillated over the design of agrarian reform[120] and subscribed to the doctrine of free-trade, perceived as a prerequisite for maintaining and strengthening the western connection but favorable, in fact, to boyar, cereal-exporting interests.[121] Some of its representatives even came to value boyardom as an integral part of a healthy social body and identified themselves by a "conservative" label.[122] Overall, however, the populist-democratic rhetoric survived unaltered across the defeat of the revolutionary uprisings and throughout the following years, spent in exile by most members of the revolutionary party. Although never effective in initiating social policies and hardly prepared to sacrifice the class

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117 Filitti, "Frământările politice şi sociale", pp. 147-171.

118 G. Zane, "Saint-simonism şi fourierism în România", in *Studii*, ed. de Elena G. Zane, Bucureşti, Ed. Eminescu, 1980, pp. 61-81.

119 "Proclamația de la Islaz", in Paul Cornea, Mihai Zamfir, coord.., *Gândirea românească în epoca paşoptistă*, Bucureşti, Ed. pentru Literatură, 1969, pp. 49-61.

120 Xenopol, *Istoria partidelor politice*, pp. 284-293.

121 Eugen Demetrescu, *Liberalismul economic în evoluția României moderne*, Bucureşti, n. p., 1940.

122 I. Eliade Rădulescu, *Echilibrul între antiteze*, ed. de Petre V. Haneş, Bucureşti, Minerva, vol. 1, 1916 [1859-1869], pp. 57-178; Radu Tomoioagă, "Paternitatea articolelor din *Conservatorul*", in *Personalități şi tendințe în perioada paşoptistă*, Bucureşti, Minerva, 1976, pp. 161-169.

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interests of its promoters for the sake of putting into practice wholeheartedly their professed ideals, this brand of democratic radicalism enjoyed a greater public resonance than allowed by comparative historical approaches underscoring the constitutive ideological timidity of Romanian modernizing liberalism of Enlightenment progeny, coming from the inescapable force of its social constraints.[123] Having said this, it is the more important to highlight the discursive transformation taking place in the two principalities, then in the Romanian state, between 1856 and 1876, with a turning point during the 1860's.

5. Unlike in Serbia and Bulgaria, Romanian ideological dynamics was marked, starting with the last four decades of the XIXth century, by a tendency of leaning towards the Right, which would continue uninterrupted up to the years of the Second World War. This evolution was inaugurated by a new departure of liberalism itself. Previously described – when noticed at all – as just the result of discursive maturation suffered by the doctrine when confronting the requirements of practical politics, after leaving behind the revolutionary age – and enhanced by the very physical maturation of some of its main exponents[124] –, the turning point in question has to be characterized, in fact, as a genuine new beginning on a fractured historical path. When attaining political adulthood, fortyeightism was transformed beyond recognition into precisely that brand of authoritarian modernizing liberalism whose image was to be projected backwards in time by the legitimating historical

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[123] Kitromilides, "The Enlightenment East and West".

[124] P. Constantinescu-Iaşi et al., coord., *Istoria României*, Bucureşti, Ed. Academiei R. P. R., vol. 4, 1964, pp. 518-571; Apostol Stan, *Grupări şi curente politice în România între Unire şi Independență*, Bucureşti, Ed. Ştiințifică şi Enciclopedică, 1979; Gheorghe Platon, coord., *Istoria românilor*, Bucureşti, Ed. Enciclopedică, vol. 7/2, 2003, pp. 149-232.

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views of Xenopol, Zeletin and Lovinescu, misleadingly followed in this respect by later scholarship, Romanian and foreign alike. This metamorphosis took place in connection with internal political development, itself unfolded in a changing international setting.

Taking advantage of the end of the Russian protectorate (supportive of the *protipendada*-dominated social order) in 1854 – as a result of western allied military intervention against Russia's renewed expansionist drive in the Balkans – and of its replacement with a system of regional security sponsored primarily by Second Empire France – following the defeat of Russia in the Crimean War in 1856 – fortyeighter liberalism got immersed, first, in an all-encompassing "national party" devoted to the cause of the union between the two Principalities,[125] in order to make its governmental apprenticeship in united Romania after 1859, under princes Alexandru Ioan Cuza and Carol I. Large scale political regroupings within the still informally organized liberal and conservative camps accompanied tremendous governmental instability up to 1871, when a semblance of stability was obtained – with the Crown starting to get elevated to the position of a largely autonomous power-actor always aiming to draw the political agenda – in the new international framework created by German unification.[126] A conservative tenure between 1871 and 1876 – marked by the formal structuring of the Liberal Party in 1875 – was followed by a much more effective liberal one between 1876 and 1888, correspondingly marked by the emergence of the Conservative Party in 1880. Briefly put into question by the European crisis focused upon the Balkans of 1875 – leading to Romanian full independence

[125] Xenopol, *Istoria partidelor politice*, pp. 302-372; Mihai Cojocariu, *Partida naţională şi constituirea statului român (1856-1859)*, Iaşi, Ed. Universităţii "Alexandru Ioan Cuza", 1995.

[126] Paul E. Michelson, *Conflict and Crisis. Romanian Political Development, 1861-1871*, New York, Garland, 1987.

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towards the Porte in 1878 –, German-dominated international order was entrenched by the Congress of Berlin of 1878 – followed by the international recognition of Romania as a kingdom in 1881 – and the establishment of the Triple Alliance in 1882 – joined by Romania in 1883. The system of two-parties rotation in power would then continue to function undisturbed up into the period of the First World War and its immediate aftermath, with the Liberal Party established as the privileged governmental political force and increasingly enmeshed in a strong flavor of clientelism, due to the growing control exercised over the party machinery and its policies by Ion C. Brătianu and his close associates.

The taming of revolutionary liberalism and its transformation into a discourse of order started very early during the period. It manifested itself already before the ideal could be checked against the challenge of governmental responsibilities, when Brătianu reissued in the country – in 1857 – his article entitled "Nationality" – formerly published in an exile journal in 1853 – by operating relevant changes in terms of its populist rhetoric.[127]A watershed in the process was the departure of the Brătianu wing of the yet amorphous liberal party from fortyeighter social ideals over the much overdue agrarian reform introduced – in full faithfulness to the same radical ideology – by prince Cuza and his minister M. Kogălniceanu in 1864, at the price of a Bonapartist coup.[128] As reflected in parliamentary speeches,[129] party newspaper articles[130] and propagandistic

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[127] Ion C. Brătianu, "Naționalitatea", in Paul Cornea, Mihai Zamfir, coord., *Gândirea românească în epoca paşoptistă*, Bucureşti, Ed. pentru Literatură, 1969, pp. 471-494. Compare Idem, "Naționalitatea", in *Românul* 1: 21, 1857, p. 3; 1: 24, 1857, p. 2; 1: 26, 1857, pp. 2-3; 1: 29, 1857, pp. 1-2; 1: 33, 1857, pp. 2-3.

[128] Xenopol, *Istoria partidelor politice*, pp. 400-461; Apostol Stan, *Putere politică şi democrație în România*, Bucureşti, Albatros, 1995, pp. 16-37.

[129] Ion C. Brătianu, *Acte şi cuvântări*, ed. de G. Marinescu şi C. Grecescu, Bucureşti, Cartea Românească, vols. 1-9, 1930-1943;

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pieces of official party history,[131] the discourse of authoritarian modernizing liberalism came to be encapsulated in forceful pronouncements of the early interwar period, which made clear that dedication to social discipline was a heavy requirement of national growth.[132] The clearest new addition to ideological refashioning underway came, however, from the part of a new school of economic thinking, set in the tradition of Listian protectionism and emerging in the 1870's, in order to establish itself very soon as mainstream within the party and beyond, among both academics and policy makers.[133] Xenopol contributed to the new wisdom by adding a touch of sociological theorizing, when arguing – in anticipation of A. Gerschenkron[134] and preparing the ground for the latter rationalizing historical views of Lovinescu – that state sponsored social change can accompany industrialization geared by governmental devices.[135]

Discursurile lui Ion I. C. Brătianu, ed. de George Fotino, Bucureşti, Cartea Românească, vols. 1-3, 1933-1939; Vintilă I. C. Brătianu, *Scrieri şi cuvântări*, ed. de G. Marinescu şi C. Grecescu, Bucureşti, Imprimeriile "Independența", vols. 1-3, 1937-1940.

130 Relevant entries in Apostol Stan, Mircea Iosa, *Liberalismul politic în România, de la origini până la 1918*, Bucureşti, Ed. Enciclopedică, 1996; Şerban Rădulescu-Zoner et al., *Istoria Partidului Național Liberal*, Bucureşti, ALL, 2000.

131 *Istoricul Partidului Național-Liberal de la 1848 şi până astăzi*, Bucureşti, n. p., 1923.

132 I. G. Duca, "Doctrina liberală", in the collective volume *Doctrinele partidelor politice*, ed. de Petre Dan, Bucureşti, Garamond, n. d. [1996 (1923)], pp. 144-154.

133 Radu-Dan Vlad, *Gândirea economică românească despre industrializare, 1859-1900*, Bucureşti, Mica Valahie, 2001.

134 Alexander Gerschenkron, *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective. A Book of Essays*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1976 [1962].

135 John Michael Montias, "Notes on the Romanian Debate on Sheltered Industrialization", Kenneth Jowitt, ed., *Social Change in Romania, 1860-1940. A Debate on Development in a European*

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Besides strengthening its discursive consistency, oligarchic liberalism came to be deeply entrenched in social practices, most obviously by establishing, during the long liberal tenure of 1876-1888, institutional networks running from the central governmental offices to the countryside and able to keep under a tight control the electoral process (with salient counterparts established at the same time in Hungary, Serbia and Bulgaria[136]). In spite of this, expressions of radical liberalism did not completely disappear from public space. As advanced over the closing decades of the XIXth century by C. A. Rosetti, G. Panu or B. Delavrancea,[137] such utterances brought no innovation except a semblance of growing confusion and indetermination, and they can best serve for setting in a glaring contrast the mainstream doctrine. Criticisms of liberalism as the main political force were much more conspicuous at the time, and they would continue to unfold into the interwar period. Displaying a remarkable unity across ideological dividing lines, they originated from (rejuvenated) conservative sources in order to develop into the large body of social criticism whose main tenets were shared by the Right and the Left and which would come to be described, by both its practitioners and their opponents from liberal headquarters, under the label of "critical culture". Central to it was a critical sociology of the ruling elite, depicted as increasingly dominated by a bureaucratic class with a Liberal Party political core. Elaborated in the 1870's by conservative authors acutely aware of their new oppositional status by reference to the formerly oppositional

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Nation, Berkeley, University of California, Institute of International Studies, 1978, p. 60.

136 Andrew C. Janos, "The Politics of Backwardness in Continental Europe, 1780-1945", in *World Politics* 41: 2, 1989, pp. 342-344.

137 Marin Bucur, *C. A. Rosetti: mesianism şi donquijotism revoluţionar*, Bucureşti, Minerva, 1970; Corneliu Mateescu, *G Panu şi radicalismul românesc la sfârşitul secolului al XIX-lea*, Bucureşti, Ed. Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică, 1987; Barbu Delavrancea, *Crochiuri şi portrete. Articole politice*, ed. de Emilia Şt. Milicescu, Bucureşti, Museion, n. d. [1996].

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liberalism,[138] this idea was gradually broadened into a multilayered understanding of the Romanian developmental deviation from the western path of modernizing change.

6. Ideological evolution following the important *caesura* of the 1860's revolved entirely within the orbit of "critical culture", continuously expanded – and augmented in terms of its critical edge – on the basis of new intellectual additions coming from both western and Russian sources. Its right-wing segment displayed a determined orientation towards political radicalization, and we shall come back to the turning points of the process below.

The left-wing compartment, otherwise, shown a marked inclination towards fragmentation, accompanied by the semblance of a chronic and irretrievable feebleness. Not unexpectedly, this syndrome was mirrored by the historical canons. While undeniable, it nevertheless led to establishing the tendency of overemphasizing the same shortcomings and of underestimating, as such, the impact of intellectual currents of the sort on the general evolution of Romanian society. As expressed in pieces of international scholarship, this interpretative wisdom makes the low profile maintained by the Left in pre-communist Romania largely accountable for the overly repressive nature of local communism and for the virtual absence of reformist and dissenting voices under the communist regime.[139] If not reconstructed historically with the force of a vindication appropriate for narrating the vagaries of a chronically aggrieved minority,[140] the Left has

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[138] Theodor Rosetti, "Despre direcțiunea progresului nostru" [1874], in Eugen Lovinescu, coord., *Antologia ideologiei junimiste*, Bucureşti, Casa Şcoalelor, 1942, pp. 117-162; Titu Maiorescu, "Asupra reformei legii pentru instrucțiunea publică" [1876], in *Discursuri parlamentare*, ed. de Constantin Schifirneț, Bucureşti, Albatros, vol. 1, 2001 [1897, 1915], pp. 229-253.

[139] Michael Shafir, "Political Culture, Intellectual Dissent and Intellectual Consent: the Case of Romania", in *Orbis* 27: 2, 1983, pp. 393-420.

[140] F. Vladimir Krasnosselski, *Stânga în România, 1832-1948. Tentativă de sinucidere sau asasinat?*, n. p., Ed. Victor Frunză, 1991.

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been depicted as provocatively exotic or embarrassingly quixotic.[141] What is more, the diagnostic has tended to be applied to the narrower topic of the role performed by Marxism in pre-communist Romania.[142] In order to get a clearer view of the issue, one must be careful not to mistake diffusiveness for scarcity, organizational feebleness for intellectual paucity or ideological syncretism for cultural non-relevance. With Marxist socialism at its core, the Left disseminated in society a surge for democratization, performing much the same pressures to this extent as its western counterpart.[143] As for Marxism itself, one can discover it as acting – alongside its most characteristic ideological embodiments – with the status of an intellectual tool used for various ideological purposes. When the whole span of its occurrences of this type is covered, it emerges as by far the most prominent instrument thus employed at the time for making sense of the Romanian social situation.

Marxism came to Romania primarily from Russia, in the 1870's and the 1880's. In the space of the autocratic empire, the western revolutionary doctrine came to be embodied in four influential trends, of which two – Second International social-democracy and legal Marxism (the Russian counterpart of the school of *Kathedersozialismus*)[144] – had recognizable counterparts in the West (in spite of the adjustments they had adopted in order to face meaningfully the specific challenges arising from peripheral backwardness). The other two – reformist populism and Leninism (the first and, respectively, the last of the four to emerge) – appeared,

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[141] Stelian Tănase, *Clienții lu' tanti Varvara. Istorii clandestine*, Bucureşti, Humanitas, 2005; Boia, *Capcanele istoriei*, pp. 48-94.

[142] Vladimir Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons. A Political History of Romanian Communism*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 2003, pp. 37-84.

[143] Geoff Eley, *Forging Democracy: the History of the Left in Europe, 1850-2000*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2002.

[144] Leszek Kolakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism*, New York, Norton, 2005 [1978], pp. 435, 646-655.

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instead, as full innovations deriving from the same characteristic challenges.[145] Of these East European embodiments of Marxism, two succeeded to gain ground in Romania before the First World War: populism and social-democracy, with Constantin Stere[146] and, respectively, Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea[147] as intellectual leaders. The other two followed in their footsteps after the war. A new tide of Russian revolutionary ideas led to a split within social-democracy in 1921, with a branch getting affiliated to the Komintern.[148] Operating as a small and clandestine political organization between 1924 and 1944, communism produced an intellectual figure of lasting importance in the person of Lucrețiu Pătrăşcanu. During the 1920's, Ştefan Zeletin cast his defense of the Liberal Party's policies in the mould of a historical sociology of Romanian modernization claiming faithfulness to the spirit of Marxism. International scholarship discovered him as sharing the stance of Russian legal Marxism[149] (of which one prominent representative, Peter Struve, had travelled a long road from social-democracy to conservative liberalism[150]).

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145 Andrzej Walicki, *The Controversy over Capitalism. Studies in the Social Philosophy of the Russian Populists*, Notre Dame, Ind., The University of Notre Dame Press, 1989 [1969].

146 Michael Kitch, "Constantin Stere and Rumanian Populism", in *The Slavonic and East European Review* 53: 131, 1975, pp. 248-271.

147 Idem, "Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea and Rumanian Marxism", in *The Slavonic and East European Review* 55: 1, 1977, pp. 65-89.

148 Lucien Karchmar, "Communism in Romania 1918-1921", in Ivo Banac, ed., *The Effects of World War I: The Class War after the Great War: The Rise* of *Communist Parties in East Central Europe*, 1918-1921, Boulder, Colo., East European Monographs, 1983, pp. 127-187.

149 Joseph Love, *Crafting the Third World. Theorizing Underdevelopment in Rumania and Brasil*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1996, p. 47.

150 Richard Pipes, *Struve, Liberal on the Left, 1870-1905*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1970; Idem, *Struve, Liberal on the Right, 1905-1944*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1980.

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Neither the agrarian populism of Stere and his associates – usually treated as belonging together with the ideological family of cultural traditionalism[151] –, nor the argumentation of Zeletin – as a general rule packed together with that of Lovinescu on account of their shared opposition to traditionalism[152] – have ever found stable places under the rubric of Marxism in Romanian historical canons. This amounts to saying that the role of Marxist sociology is greatly underestimated when it comes to explaining the shaping of various intellectual structures in Romania after the 1880's. Supported also by other examples and highly relevant with respect to the history of the Left, this statement occasionally applies (as shown below) to the ideological orientations of the Right. However, it is maybe most significant when applied to liberalism itself.

Zeletin's claim to speak as both a Marxist sociologist and a defender of the modernizing liberal oligarchy rests on his accomplishment to explain local social change as driven from bottom up, by the infrastructural economic forces of capitalism, against the prevailing view of the entire critical culture – shared by the anti-oligarchic Marxist thinking as well – that Romanian modernization was impelled by superstructural institutional factors (themselves put in motion by ideological initiatives). Relying on Rudolf Hilferding and Werner Sombart for classifying the forms and historical stages of capitalism, Zeletin identified past and present Romanian capitalism with the older, commercial and mercantilist type of capitalist economy, and ascribed to the immediate future (in the course of being shaped) the financial and monopolistic type, with no room left for local ventures of free trade liberalism based on industrialism

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151 Z. Ornea, *Sămănătorismul*, Bucureşti, Ed. Fundației Culturale Române, 1998 [1970]; Idem, *Poporanismul*, Bucureşti, Minerva, 1972.

152 Idem, *Tradiționalism şi modernitate*; Idem, *Anii treizeci. Extrema dreaptă românească*, Bucureşti, Ed. Fundației Culturale Române, 1995.

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unhindered by either state control or banking cartels.[153] By doing so, he legitimated interventionist practices and mild authoritarianism both retrospectively and prospectively, giving a new twist to Romanian protectionist economic thinking. Meeting with the younger Mihail Manoilescu on the platform of defending statist "neoliberalism" (and even of searching a better engine for its development, as embodied in the People's Party, acting as an adjunct to the Liberal Party in the 1920's),[154] Zeletin thus handed over the interventionist wisdom to the rising corporatist theory.

In interwar Romania, the label of "neoliberalism" was used for designating the precise opposite of the anti-Keynesian and deregulating economic theory and practice that it would come to stand for in the second half of the XXth century, in the West and all throughout the world.[155] The transition from statist liberalism to corporatism underwent by Romanian economic policies and theories at the time was characteristic to virtually all the contemporary East European countries, except Czechoslovakia,[156] while Romania of the immediate pre-communist decades was discovered by foreign scholarship as displaying a quasi-homogenous (yet multifaceted) opposition to free trade.[157] It is undeniable,

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153 Zeletin, *Burghezia română*, pp. 178-191.

154 Idem, "Neoliberalismul" [1926], in *Neoliberalismul*, ed. de C. D. Zeletin, Bucureşti, Scripta, 1992 [1927], pp. 83-100; Mihail Manoilescu, "Neoliberalismul", in the collective volume *Doctrinele partidelor politice*, ed. de Petre Dan, Bucureşti, Garamond, n. d. [1996 (1923)], pp. 198-228.

155 David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005.

156 Andrew C. Janos, "The One-party State and Social Mobilization: East Europe between the Wars", in Samuel P. Huntington, Clement H. Moore, eds., *Authoritarian Politics in Modern Society. The Dynamics of Established One-party Systems*, New York, Basic Books, 1970, pp. 204-236; Chirot, "Ideology, Reality and Competing Models of Development in Eastern Europe".

157 Angela Harre, "Conceptul de progres: relația conflictuală dintre liberalism şi intervenția statală", in Neumann, Heinen, coord., *Istoria României prin concepte*, pp. 173-200.

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moreover, that the members of the economics profession of the country under communism did not contribute, alongside their counterparts in Hungary or Poland, to the rediscovery of political liberalism[158] or to the world-wide theoretical rejuvenation of those anti-interventionist economic views later poured into the "neoliberal consensus" that followed 1989.[159]

It is, therefore, understandable that the entire relevant scholarship, domestic and foreign to the same extent, has failed until now to delineate and map a fourth departure in the history of Romanian liberalism. Featuring as a pathetic defense of free-trade, harshly critical of bureaucratism, protectionism and interventionism – and blaming mainstream liberalism as responsible for them – this ideological stance was broadened towards embracing an equally staunch philosophical defense of individualism, accompanied by a sustained critique of (diffuse) collectivist ideas and practices, manifested in the guise of socialism, agrarianism, corporatism and "neomedievalism". Originally revolving around the short-lived journal *Curentul nou* – with two series issued in 1905-1906 (at Galați) and, respectively, in 1920 (at Bucharest) – this trend of thought found a new venue in the Bucharest-based journal *Libertatea, economică, politică, socială, culturală* – published between 1933 and 1940 –, enlarging its scope again in order to reject rising Romanian and European fascism, together with Soviet communism, at the price of muting its explicit critique of Liberal Party policies and traditions. After reaching its climax between 1933 and the end of 1937, it survived, deeply truncated, fighting a rearguard battle, accepting dire compromises and eventually embarrassingly contradicting its original discourse, throughout the following three years marked by a descent into

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158 Andrzej Walicki, "Liberalism in Poland", in *Critical Review* 1: 1, 1988, pp. 8-38.

159 Johanna Bockman, Gil Eyal, "Eastern Europe as a Laboratory for Economic Knowledge: the Transnational Roots of Neoliberalism", in *The American Journal of Sociology* 108: 2, 2002, pp. 310-352.

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authoritarianism under the National Christian Party government (up to February 1938), then under the royal dictatorship of king Carol II (up to September 1940) and even under the National Legionary State, to December 1940.

Besides its very neglect in the available scholarship,[160] this Romanian vindication of classical liberalism is remarkable for its ideological entanglements. Articulated immediately after the moment 1900 by the Jewish journalists and socialist dissenters H. Sanielevici (trained as a literary critic, founder and director at *Curentul nou*, after publishing his first long piece of social criticism in the literary supplement of the left-wing daily newspaper *Adevărul*, in 1901) and Ştefan Antim (trained as a jurist and joining Sanielevici's periodical in 1920), it was originally cast as a brand of social criticism indebted to the entire tradition of the "critical culture", but continuing to make heavy recourse to Marxist sociology for explaining the Romanian social landscape, described as marked by a bureaucratic-run interventionist economy[161] and by an agrarian economy subservient to Liberal Party interests.[162] The two contributed extensively to *Libertatea*. Headed by the economist George Strat – acting as chief-editor and emerging as the third most important voice of the school, theoretically prodigious although less explicit and elaborate in terms of social criticism[163] –, the journal was served by other authors who had also started their intellectual journey by a gradual disentanglement from Marxism.[164] It still has to be

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[160] Ornea, "Tradiționalism şi modernitate"; Idem, *Anii treizeci*.

[161] H. Sanielevici, *Încercări critice*, Bucureşti, Carol Göbl, 1903.

[162] Ştefan Antim, *Chestiunea socială în România*, Bucureşti, Imprimeria "La Roumanie", 1908.

[163] George Strat, *Elogiul libertății*, Bucureşti, Tipografia de Artă Leopold Geller, 1937.

[164] Anastasie Gusti, "Marx-marxismul-marxişti", in *Scrieri sociale, politice şi economice*, ed. de George Strat, Bucureşti, Editura Librăriei Universitare I. Cărăbaş, 1940, pp. 163-190.

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explained, however, how it came about that the publishing venture which started to shelter a pleading for liberalism in Romania precisely at the moment of the Nazi seizure in Germany, in January 1933, was sponsored by the industrialist and politician Ion Gigurtu – also acting as a director –, notorious for his involvement in the politics of royal authoritarianism and reputed as a disguised sympathizer of Iron Guard fascism[165] (or at least as a sometimes pragmatic and interested funder of it[166]). Moreover, the precise scope of this ideological orientation – most eccentric by reference to the historical canons – has yet to be measured against the record of not only the Romanian,[167] but also the East European interwar economic ideas and policies.[168]

Marxism helped, thus, in the creation of what could be claimed as the Romanian pedigree of the postwar liberal revival in Europe and the whole world,[169] followed, then, by a new surge leading to the neoliberal supremacy of the past several decades.[170] We could be tempted to look at the "neoliberalism" of Zeletin – elaborated as a reinforcement of existing Liberal Party policies – as to a corresponding Romanian contribution to the development of the rival,

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165 Mircea Muşat, Ion Ardeleanu, *România după marea unire*, vol. 2: *1933-1940*, Bucureşti, Ed. Ştiințifică şi Enciclopedică, 1988, pp. 95, 338.

166 Armin Heinen, *Legiunea "Arhanghelul Mihail". Mişcare socială şi organizație politică*, trad. de Cornelia şi Delia Eşianu, Bucureşti, Humanitas, 1999, pp. 325.

167 Ioan Saizu, *Modernizarea României contemporane. Perioada interbelică. Pas şi impas*, Bucureşti, Ed. Academiei Române, 1991.

168 Love, *Crafting the Third World*; Helga Schültz, Eduard Kubú, eds., *History and Culture of Economic Nationalism in East Central Europe*, Berlin, Berliner Wissenschafts Verlag, 2006.

169 Fabio Masini, "Designing the Institutions of International Liberalism: Some Contributions from the Interwar Period", in *Constitutional Political Economy* 23: 1, 2012, pp. 45-65.

170 Marion Fourcade-Gourinchas, Sarah L. Babb, "The Rebirth of the Liberal Creed: Paths to Neoliberalism in Four Countries", in *The American Journal of Sociology* 108: 3, 2002, pp. 533-579.

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Keynesian view, meant to contain the disruptive effects of market unpredictability by state-induced regulating designs. Such an interpretation seems to be supported by the fact that Zeletin envisioned the evolution of world society towards socialism, expected to come from the gradual economic socialization deriving inescapably – and without involving either social upheavals or the active participation of the working class – from the cartelization of industries under monopolistic capitalism.[171] This is misleading, and the stark difference between the peripheral oligarchic liberalism supported by Zeletin and the liberal search for welfare state solutions, started in the West at the turn of the XIXth to the XXth centuies,[172] emerges clearly when the first one is set in comparison with another eccentric voice of Romanian liberal advocacy. Offered by the sociologist Dumitru Drăghicescu – a disciple of Durkheim, a professed socialist at the beginning of his career[173] but also a reformist member of the Liberal Party, eager to re-infuse it with the forgotten democratic ideals of the 1848 era[174] – this ideological stance repeatedly pointed to a self-definition as "liberal-socialist",[175] reminiscent of the ideas exposed, at the same time, by the Italian anti-fascist militant Carlo Roselli (also a former socialist).[176]

In the 1930's, Drăghicescu debated cordially with George Strat, in the pages of *Libertatea*, suggesting qualifications

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171 Zeletin, "Neoliberalismul", p. 92.

172 Michael Freeden, "The Coming of the Welfare State", in Terence Ball, Richard Bellamy, eds., *The Cambridge History of Twentieth-century Political Thought*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003, pp. 7-44.

173 Dumitru Drăghicescu, *Idealul creator. Eseu psiho-sociologic asupra evoluției sociale*, ed şi trad. de Virgiliu Constantinescu-Galiceni, Bucureşti, Albatros, 2005 [1914].

174 Idem, *Evoluția ideilor liberale*, Bucureşti, Imprimeriile "Independența", 1921, p. 18.

175 Idem, *Partide politice şi clase sociale*, Bucureşti, n. p., 1922, p. 84.

176 Stanislao G. Pugliese, *Carlo Roselli: Socialist Heretic and Anti-fascist Exile*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1999.

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to the anti-collectivism enthusiastically embraced by the journal.[177] His arguments about the devastating effects of unhindered economic individualism recall the stance later exposed by Karl Polanyi in conjunction with the New Deal agenda.[178] The full contours of his doctrine emerge, however, in the light of an earlier journalistic episode. Over the year 1923, Drăghicescu participated to public debates targeting the constitutional revision underway by issuing the journal *Dreptatea socială*, where he argued in favor of a broader conception of social rights and of a state able to promote redistributive policies, taking an active involvement in the relations between the capitalist and the working classes.[179] Zeletin contributed heavily to the same journal, with articles meant to (cynically) defend the intermingling between bourgeois interests and state power.[180] The two stances opposed to the minimal state conception of classical liberalism have always been conflated by historical accounts,[181] this interpretation being fed by the undeniable fact that the constitutional document adopted in the same year did

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[177] Dumitru Drăghicescu, "Determinismul social şi valoarea iniţiativei individuale", in *Libertatea* 1: 11, 1933, pp. 161-163; Idem, "Liberalismul şi economia dirijată", in *Libertatea* 2: 13-14, 1934, pp. 193-194; G. Strat, "Răspuns domnului D. Drăghicescu sau despre 'pseudo-liberalismul român'", in *Libertatea* 2: 21, 1934, pp. 325-328.

[178] Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation. The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*, Boston, Beacon Press, 2001 [1944].

[179] Dumitru Drăghicescu, "Noţiunea proprietăţii şi formele ei", in *Dreptatea socială* 1: 3, 1923, pp. 67-72; Idem, "Dreptul de proprietate şi pacea socială", in *Dreptatea socială* 1: 4, 1923, pp. 106-110; "Proprietatea în întreprinderile mari. Regimul cointeresării", in *Dreptatea socială* 1: 8, 1923, pp. 227-234.

[180] Ştefan Zeletin, "Finanţa naţională şi politica de stat", in *Dreptatea socială* 1: 7, 1923, pp. 206-219.

[181] M. Rusenescu, I. Saizu, *Viaţa politică în România, 1922-1928*, Bucureşti, Ed. Politică, 1979, pp. 27-29; Mircea Muşat, Ion Ardeleanu, *România după marea unire*, vol. 1: *1918-1933*, Bucureşti, Ed. Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică, 1986, pp. 55-70.

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provide enlarged space for interventionist policies.[182] One must be careful to disentangle them from each other. Indebted to the general reorientation of turn-of-the-century liberalism towards social concerns[183] and revolving in the orbit of the "new liberalism" predating the economic depression and the accompanying Keynesian theorizing,[184] Drăghicescu's vision – to the same extent as that of classical liberalism supported by Sanielevici, Antim and Strat – is hard to be measured against the East European contemporary record of political and economic ideas. It can be set in relation, nevertheless, to the Russian brand of new liberalism, originally articulated by Vladimir Soloviev on the basis of Christian philosophical premises – against the background of the great reforms introduced by Alexander II in the 1860's – and reaching its climax in the thinking of Pavel Novgorodtsev and Bogdan Kistiakovsky, close to the Kadet party official ideological line.[185] It has to be seen, moreover, as the most significant sequel to the democratic radicalism of fortyeighter liberalism.

Having thus disclosed the contribution of Marxism to the ideological reinforcement of modernizing oligarchic liberalism, to the theoretical elaboration of free trade liberalism critical of Liberal Party policies and to the rejuvenation of left-wing, radical liberalism of fortyeighter progeny, one can better understand the various ideological uses it was put to on the Left side of the political spectrum. Populism has to be assessed, for sure, as the most effective intellectual trend of the kind in terms of its imprint on political and social life. This is due, first, to the involvement

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[182] Roberts, *Rumania*, pp. 97-99.

[183] Richard Bellamy, *Liberalism and Modern Society. A Historical Argument*, University Park, Penns., The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992.

[184] Michael Freeden, *The New Liberalism. An Ideology of Social Reform*, Oxford, Claredon Press, 1978.

[185] Walicki, *Legal Philosophies of Russian Liberalism*, pp. 165-403.

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of its promoters – as members or fellow-travelers of the Liberal Party before the First World War, after acting in the same way alongside the social democratic party affiliated to the Second International, between 1893 and 1899 – in sustained public pleading in favor of democratization through the extension of franchise and of an agrarian reform meant to consolidate the economic condition of the peasantry. Second, the "peasantist" offshoot of the same doctrine – based on a political party that was to suffer successive metamorphoses since 1919 – acted as the main oppositional force throughout the interwar period – in competition with the fascist Iron Guard after 1933 –, fighting the Liberal Party establishment in the 1920's and the Carolist one over the following decade (also making governments between 1928 and 1933) and contributing most decisively to the slight, but undeniable evolution of Romanian politics towards a greater degree of pluralism (manifested by a lesser dependence of electoral outcomes on governmental control).[186]

Hardly acting towards the neighboring countries as a source of liberal ideas and ideological visions of gradual improvement, autocratic Russia was by far the most important regional laboratory of political radicalism.[187] Before being cast in the mould of Leninism, radicalism of the socialist stripe adopted here – in the 1860's and 1870's – the form of revolutionary populism infused with the spirit of Blanquist terrorist conspiracy, built on Herzen's view of an agrarian path to socialism and Chernyshevsky's resurrection of the Enlightenment ideal in a positivistic, yet anti-liberal

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[186] Paul A. Shapiro, "Romania's Past as Challenge for the Future: a Developmental Approach to Interwar Politics", in Daniel Nelson, ed., *Romania in the 1980's*, Boulder, Colo., East European Monographs, 1981, pp. 17-67.

[187] Vladimir C. Nahirni, "The Russian Intelligentsia: from Men of Ideas to Men of Convictions", in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 4: 4, 1962, pp. 403-435.

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and anti-capitalist guise.[188] Russian populism also enjoyed, then – in the 1870's and 1880's –, a second life as a reformist doctrine based on Marxist sociology.[189] East Central and South East European populism and peasantism vacillated between the two legacies,[190] and the Romanian brand got reputed for its irretrievable tendency to brush aside peasant-oriented goals in favor of a vague vindication of public decency.[191] In so far as it adopted a "go to the people" attitude – thus helping in igniting social tensions in the countryside leading to the peasant revolt of 1907 –, a local discourse invoking rural interests against the great landholding economy and the fiscal pressures sustaining sheltered industrialization was actually targeted at promoting interests of the upper propertied peasantry and of the small rural bourgeoisie.[192] Stere's own (mainstream) populist advocacy stayed even more firmly within the reformist stance than the doctrine of his Russian inspirers, V. P. Vorontsov and N. Danielson, combing the latter's program of its socialist objectives and replacing them with the vision of an agrarian democracy.[193] Although setting the baseline for an evolution leading towards the rather empty

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188 Franco Venturi, *Roots of Revolution: a History of the Populist and Socialist Movements in Nineteenth-century Russia*, transl. by Francis Haskell, rev. ed., London, Phoenix Press, 2001 [1960].

189 Arthur P. Mendel, *Dilemmas of Progress in Tsarist Russia. Legal Marxism and Legal Populism*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1961; Walicki, *The Controversy over Capitalism*.

190 George D. Jackson, „Peasant Political Movements in Eastern Europe", in Henry A Landsberger, ed., *Rural Protest: Peasant Movements and Social Change*, London, Macmillan, 1974, pp. 259-315.

191 Roberts, *Rumania*, pp. 139-169; Kitch, "Constantin Stere and Rumanian Populism".

192 Philip Gabriel Eidelberg, *The Great Romanian Peasant Revolt of 1907. Origins of a Modern "Jacquerie"*, Leiden, Brill, 1974, pp. 155-189.

193 Kitch, "Constantin Stere and Rumanian Populism". Compare K. J. Kottam, "Boleslaw Limanowski, a Polish Theoretician of Agrarian Socialism", in *The Slavonic and East European Review*, 51: 122, 1973, pp. 58-74.

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rhetoric of the 1930's regarding a "peasant state" tainted with corporatist features,[194] the ideology of Stere bears witness for how Marxist culture supported, in Romania, the pressure for democratization under an agrarian label.

The fact that a pleading for classical liberalism emerged, in Romania, from within the fold of social democracy should not appear as paradoxical. As offered by Dobrogeanu-Gherea and a score of disciples, social criticism in the Marxist frame bears a powerful mark of eccentricity, due to its readiness to postpone indefinitely socialist revolution for the sake of taking an open involvement in the development of capitalism and in removing the neo-feudal, oligarchic and interventionist social and economic practices distorting capitalist modernization in the country. While following in this respect the maim trust of Plekhanov's and generally of the Second International theory of revolution – predicated as possible and legitimate only against the background of consummate capitalist development and on the basis of genuine democratic support –, Romanian socialism went a long way towards acting as the real local voice of (free-trade) liberalism, against the official interpretation of the doctrine, as embodied by the Liberal Party and defended by Zeletin and Lovinescu. The Romanian historical canon has never emphasized enough this fact,[195] while foreign scholarship addressed it mainly in order to indicate socialist theoretical sophistication as a source of political ineffectiveness.[196]

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194 Ernest Ene, *Spre statul țărănesc*, Bucureşti, Ed. Eminescu, 1932; Hans-Christian Maner, *Parlamentarismul în România, 1930-1940*, trad. de Adela Motoc, Bucureşti, Ed. Enciclopedică, 2004, pp. 228-239.

195 Constantin-Titel Petrescu, *Socialismul în România*, Bucureşti, Ed. Fundației Social-Democrate "Constantin-Titel Petrescu", 2003 [1944]; Krasnosselski, *Stânga în România*.

196 Roberts, *Rumania*, pp. 243-258.

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In all its embodiments, Romanian Marxist ideological advocacy (or generally left-wing discourse of Marxist inspiration) did not display the rebellious spirit and revolutionary determination characteristic to Serbian-Yugoslavian[197] and Bulgarian[198] ideological trends of the kind. Although addressing extensively issues of cultural criticism and sociology of culture,[199] local populists, socialists and communists did not embark upon that reinvention and rejuvenation of Marxism as a philosophy of alienation – leading to various cultural orientations influential later in the West – which was the main accomplishment of Polish and Hungarian Marxist thinking of the late XIXth and early XXth centuries.[200] Instead, their (and especially the social democrats') sustained effort at conceptualizing semi-feudal and semi-capitalist backwardness

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197 Jozo Tomasevich, *Peasants, Politics and Economic Change in Yugoslavia*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1955: Dorren Warriner, "Urban Thinkers and Peasant Policy in Yugoslavia, 1918-1959", in *The Slavonic and East European Review* 38: 90, 1959, pp. 59-81.

198 John D. Bell, *Peasants in Power. Alexander Stamboliski and the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union, 1899-1923*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1977; Nissan Oren, *Revolution Administered: Agrarianism and Communism in Bulgaria*, Baltimore, The John Hopkins University Press, 1973.

199 Ornea, *Poporanismul*; Idem, *Opera lui C. Dobrogeanu-Gherea*, Bucureşti, Cartea Românească, 1983; Michael Shafir, "Sociology of Knowledge in the Middle of Nowhere: Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea", in *East European Quarterly* 19: 3, 1985, pp. 321-336. Compare Vivian Pinto, "The Civic and Aesthetic Ideals of the Bulgarian *Narodnik* Writers", in *The Slavonic and East European Review* 32: 79, 1954, pp. 344-366; Peter Brock, "Tolstoyism and the Hungarian Peasant", in *The Slavonic and East European Review* 58: 3, 1980, pp. 345-369.

200 Andrzej Walicki, *Stanislas Brzozowski and the Polish Beginnings of Western Marxism*, Oxford, Claredon Press, 1989; Idem, *Marxism and the Leap to the Kingdom of Freedom. The Rise and Fall of the Communist Utopia*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1995, pp. 113-124.

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came to focus upon the privileged topic of social stratification in the setting of delayed modernization, disclosing the bureaucratic – non-feudal and non-capitalist – ruling oligarchy as the most salient feature of the syndrome. This involved, in the case of social democracy, an alliance with the capitalist bourgeoisie against the bureaucratic class, taken against reasons of electoral expediency and popular intelligibility.[201] It was this topic which eventually marked most sharply the faultline separating communist from social-democratic social theory.[202] Pătrăşcanu's determination to prove the Leninist contention that a communist revolution was feasible in a country grimed by agrarian backwardness led him to elaborate a historical sociology of Romanian modernization meant to argue the similarity between national (or peripheral) and western patters of social change. As part of the enterprise, he rejected the theory of Romanian peculiarities in terms of class structure, and especially the idea that a ruling class of bureaucratic composition stood in the way of full blown capitalist development. In doing so, the communist theorist left a heavy legacy of non-comprehensiveness to the interpretative canons prevailing in the related fields of Romanian social history and history of social thought.[203]

7. There is no better starting point for engaging with the right-wing compartment of Romanian ideological development than Pătrăşcanu's sociological views mentioned above. Published in 1944, his standard exposition of the Komintern explanation

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[201] Lotar Rădăceanu, "Oligarhia română", in *Arhiva pentru ştiinţă şi reformă socială* 5: 3-4, 1924, pp. 497-532; 6: 1-2, 1926, pp. 160-184; 6: 3-4, 1927, pp. 435-459; Roberts, *Rumania*, pp. 248.

[202] See above, chapter 4.

[203] Henri H. Stahl, *Gânditori şi curente de istorie socială românească*, ed. de Paul H. Stahl, Bucureşti, Ed. Universităţii din Bucureşti, 2001; Maria Larionescu, *Istoria sociologiei româneşti*, Bucureşti, Ed. Universităţii din Bucureşti, 2007.

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of fascism as an instrument deployed by decaying capitalism against mounting working-class pressures[204] set the interpretative orthodoxy in the country for the entire communist period, in spite of the fact that the author was to be purged shortly thereafter, and never fully rehabilitated. Unlike the others invoked in the article, this historical canon came to be abruptly abandoned after 1989. Still underway, the search for a new overarching view has to ponder the local relevance of various theoretical and comparative models available.

Delivered as part of a series of conferences meant to delineate the identity of the "young generation" of intellectuals towards their forebears, an exchange of 1934 between the younger Mircea Vulcănescu and the older Mihail Manoilescu[205] sheds a revealing light not primarily on the (much abused) topic of generational conflict, but on the relation between the corporatist doctrine appropriated (halfway) by Carol II as a device for strengthening his milder, but effective version of right-wing authoritarianism and the radical Right discourse gravitating around the enthusiastic, youthful, noisy and ineffective fascist revolution of the Iron Guard. Heavily underscored by a large part of international scholarship,[206] the well marked difference between the two ideological streams tended to be downplayed, understandably, by the historiographic tradition originated with Pătrăşcanu, which preferred to present both of them as different manifestations of one single effort to oppose the process of social emancipation.[207]

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[204] Lucrețiu Pătrăşcanu, *Sub trei dictaturi*, Bucureşti, Ed. Politică, 1970 [1944].

[205] Mircea Vulcănescu, Mihail Manoilescu, *Tendințele tinerei generații: două conferințe*, Bucureşti, Tipografia Ziarului "Universul", 1934.

[206] Janos, "The One-party State and Social Mobilization"; Chirot, "Ideology, Reality and Competing Models of Development in Eastern Europe"; Heinen, *Legiunea "Arhanghelul Mihail"*.

[207] Pătrăşcanu, *Sub trei dictaturi*; Al. Gh. Savu, *Dictatura regală (1938-1940)*, Bucureşti, Ed. Politică, 1970; Muşat, Ardeleanu, *România după marea unire*, vol. 2: *1933-1940*.

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It is also downplayed by comparative views presenting fascism as essentially a forward looking developmental ideology resting on the corporatist vision of accelerated growth, elaborated in the Italian semi-periphery and pirated by modernizing elites in other contexts of the kind, all of them ready to sacrifice parliamentary pluralism for the sake of national advancement but otherwise remaining faithful to Enlightenment rationality as an engine of progress.[208] Describing the backward looking vision of German national socialism as an alteration of the original Italian model and as an exception among the various incarnations of generic fascism,[209] this perspective also explains the Romanian anti-modern rhetoric of the Iron Guard and of its intellectual supporters as an interlude on the path leading to the final (pre-communist) victory of corporatism over its ideological competitors of the Right.[210]

While making plain its close relation to Italian fascism – in order to emerge, eventually, as the most authorized voice of European corporatism at the time[211] – Manoilescu's thinking also borrowed heavily – to the same extent as the politics of Carol II, with his effort to compete with the Iron Guard on its own ground – from the Romanian culture of traditionalist nationalism. Nevertheless, it took its main inspiration from the theory and practice of local statist and oligarchic liberalism, staying in continuation to the "neoliberal" experiments of the 1920's and emphasizing its dedication to rational institutional reordering – keenly opposed to revolutionary breaks – as a precondition for a

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[208] A. James Gregor, *Mussolini's Intellectuals. Fascist Social and Political Thought*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2005.

[209] Idem, "Fascism and Modernization: Some Addenda", in *World Politics* 26: 3, 1974, pp. 370-384.

[210] Idem, *Faces of Janus. Marxism and Fascism in the Twentieth Century*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2000, pp. 176-178.

[211] Philippe C. Schmitter, "Still the Century of Corporatism?", in *The Review of Politics* 36: 1, 1974, pp. 85-131; Love, *Crafting the Third World*, pp. 71-98.

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much awaited national breakthrough.[212] When projecting backwards into the social history of Romania his prospective vision of authoritarian modernization, Manoilescu eulogized the bourgeoisie – hailed as alien to the national body by much of traditionalist thinking – as a benefactor to the whole society (with the qualifications that it had started to act as such only after adopting the view of economic protectionism and that it could fulfill its mission only by complying to the corporatist predicament[213]). In order to accomplish this task, he widened the conceptual understanding of the same social category, defining it – in anticipation of later international views on the topic[214] – as much more than just the bureaucratic oligarchy denounced as parasitical by the critical culture and defended by Zeletin as a modernizing requirement, on the basis of describing it as including, alongside the feeble entrepreneurial elements, the entire white collar middle class.[215]

As for the revolutionary rivals of Manoilescu and Carol II, they were recently claimed as participants to a European-wide modernist political revolt against modernity, closely connected to all forms of the artistic avant-garde, sharply differentiated from the traditionalist and conservative varieties of anti-modern and anti-Enlightenment ideology and paving the way for the latter postmodernist theorizing.[216] It is undeniable that they did share, to some extent, the defining temper of such cultural trends, as well as their eagerness to reject both the values of bourgeois-liberal modernism and the settled

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[212] Vulcănescu, Manoilescu, *Tendințele tinerei generați*, pp. 27-30.

[213] Mihail Manoilescu, *Rostul şi destinul burgheziei româneşti*, ed. de Leonard Oprea, Bucureşti, Athena, 1997 [1942], pp. 125-156, 319-340.

[214] Jürgen Kocka, "The Middle Classes in Europe", in *The Journal of Modern History* 67: 4, 1995, pp. 783-806.

[215] Manoilescu, *Rostul şi destinul burgheziei româneşti*, pp. 395-476.

[216] Roger Griffin, *Modernism and Fascism: the Sense of a Beginning under Mussolini and Hitler*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, pp. 356-358; David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1989, pp. 10-38.

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expressions of pious traditionalism.[217] While undisputable and valid for other national forms of the radical Right in Eastern Europe,[218] this connection must certainly not be overstressed. The long-span unfolding of anti-Enlightenment culture which eventually issued into interwar fascism in various countries of Europe[219] combined ideological building-blocks of very different provenances. Of great significance among them was the transmutation of some strands of the Marxist Left into a revolutionary vision that dropped out, as obsolete, the objective of proletarian emancipation while adopting, instead, the ideal of a nationalist social renewal above class struggle.[220] Strongly represented in several western contexts, this trend of political thought – featuring revolutionary syndicalism as the most conspicuous voice – acted as one important thread running through the cultural dynamics which led from the late XIXth century feverish and polymorphous contestation of the *status quo* to the interwar revolution of the Right.[221] Entirely lacking in Romania, this nexus between a spiritualist interpretation of Marxism and the futurist drive to social

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[217] Irina Livezeanu, "After the Great Union: Generational Tensions, Intellectuals, Modernism and Ethnicity in Interwar Romania", in the collective volume *Nation and National Ideology*, Bucharest, New Europe College, 2002, pp. 110-127.

[218] Ivan Berend, *The Crisis Zone of Europe*, transl. by Adrienne Makkay-Chambers, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1986, pp. 37-48.

[219] Zeev Sternhell, *The Anti-Enlightenment Tradition*, transl. by David Maisel, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2010.

[220] Idem, "The 'Anti-materialist' Revision of Marxism as an Aspect of the Rise of Fascist Ideology", in *Journal of Contemporary History* 22: 3, 1987, pp. 379-400. See also H. Stuart Hughes, *Consciousness and Society: the Reorientation of European Social Thought, 1890-1930*, New York, Octagon Books, 1976 [1958], pp. 90-95, 161-192.

[221] Walter L. Adamson, "The Language of Opposition in Early Twentieth-century Italy: Rhetorical Continuities between Prewar Florentine Avant-gardism and Mussolini's Fascism", in *The Journal of Modern History* 64: 1, 1992, pp. 22-51.

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revitalization had very scant occurrences in the surrounding countries. No matter how better endowed in this respect, due to its close link to the Austrian pre-war cultural laboratory,[222] Hungary was nevertheless much akin to Romania in so far as it produced a fascist discourse with a recognizable traditionalist and backward-looking ring, deeply rooted in the culture of the Right and emerging as the result of a series of successive departures along the spectrum of right-wing ideological orientations.[223] Aside from these two fascist movements and ideologies – most powerful within the region and most significant in the whole of Europe outside Italy and Germany[224] –, the other East European varieties of radical Right stood even closer to the different strands of the conservative establishment. Thus, in Poland, the feeble fascist contestation of the Pilsudskist mainstream political trend – itself coming in power in 1926 after a previous disentanglement from socialism in the direction of militarist nationalism[225] – emerged from within the rival, "national democratic" ideological stream of Roman Dmowski. Its traditionalist orientation was fed by its indebtedness to political Catholicism.[226] The same holds true, even to a greater

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[222] Carl E. Schorske, *Fin de Siècle Vienna. Politics and Culture*, New York, Knopf, 1979; Péter Hanák, *The Garden and the Workshop: Essays on the Cultural History of Vienna and Budapest*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1988.

[223] Nicholas M. Nagy-Talavera, *The Green Shirts and the Others. A History of Fascism in Hungary and Romania*, Stanford, Hoover Institution Press, 1970, pp. 1-36, 345-376.

[224] Stanley G. Payne, "Fascism and Racism", in Terence Ball, Richard Bellamy, eds., *The Cambridge History of Twentieth-century Political Thought*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003, pp. 123-150.

[225] Joseph Rothschild, *Pilsudski's Coup d'État*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1966.

[226] Idem, *East Central Europe between the Two World Wars*, pp. 45-72; Andrew C. Janos, *East Central Europe in the Modern World. The Politics of the Borderlands from Pre- to Postcommunism*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2000, pp. 186-190.

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extent, for the cases of the more contextual Croatian and Slovakian fascist parties and ideologies.[227] All throughout the region, radicalism of the Right stood in stark continuity to the conservative and reactionary ideological trends articulated during the XIXth century,[228] and it can best be described as emerging from a "conservative revolution"[229] meant to strengthen decisively the national community by turning it back from the path of modernization,[230] but also eager to make use of modern technical – or "civilizational" – endowments for the same anti-modern "cultural" and ideological purposes.[231]

The political and intellectual wings of the Romanian conservative revolution took off at precisely the same moment. Recognizable since 1922, as a movement of student unrest unfolding under a nationalist and anti-Semitic banner, "legionary" fascism got a party embodiment in 1927, emerging from within a "national-Christian" political organization functioning since 1923.[232] Also in 1927, Mircea

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[227] Yeshayahu Jelinek, "Clergy and Fascism: the Hlinka Party in Slovakia and the Croatian Ustasha Movement", in Stein Ugelvik Larsen *at al.*, eds., *Who Were the Fascists. Social Roots of European Fascism*, Bergen, Universitetsforlaget, 1980, pp. 367-378.

[228] Hans Rogger, Eugen Weber, eds., *The European Right: a Historical Profile*, Berkeley, The University of California Press, 1965; Martin Blinkhorn, ed., *Fascists and Conservatives*, London, Unwin Hyman, 1990.

[229] Fritz Stern, *The Politics of Cultural Despair: a Study in the Rise of the Germanic Ideology*, Berkeley, The University of California Press, 1961; Werner E. Braatz, "Two Neo-Conservative Myths in Germany, 1919-1932: the 'Third Reich' and the 'New State'", in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 32: 4, 1971, pp. 569-584.

[230] Henry A. Turner, "Fascism and Modernization", in *World Politics* 24: 4, 1972, pp. 547-564.

[231] Jeffrey Herf, *Reactionary Modernism. Tehnology, Culture and Politics in Weimar and the Third Reich*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984.

[232] Irina Livezeanu, "Fascists and Conservatives in Romania: Two Generations of Nationalists", in Blinkhorn, ed., *Fascists and Conservatives*, pp. 218-239.

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Eliade published his series of articles asserting the need and legitimacy of an "experimentalist" search for national authenticity[233] against the prevailing cultural traditionalism, rooted in an Orthodox religious interpretation of national identity and revolving around the journal *Gândirea* (since 1921) and the newspaper *Cuvântul* (since 1924).[234] After 1932, the two related movements came into a deep intercourse[235] that was to survive – enhanced for a time by the Legion's growth in terms of electoral scores and popular impact starting with 1933 – the violent disbandment of the fascist party by Carol II between April and November 1938 and its rebirth in martyr dressing in September 1940, in order to get dissipated after the second dismemberment of the same political organization in January 1941, as a consequence of its failed coup against general Antonescu.

Close to the tenets of European modernist culture and harboring an "existentialist" philosophical stance, discovered as a minority thread – represented by Nae Ionescu – within old-style traditionalism,[236] Eliade's claim of social revitalization nevertheless evolved towards a demand for placing national

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[233] Mircea Eliade, "Itinerariu spiritual" [1927], in Iordan Chimet, coord., *Dreptul la memorie*, Cluj-Napoca, Dacia, vol. 4, 1993, pp. 458-499; Călinescu, "The 1927 Generation in Romania".

[234] Keith Hitchins, "*Gândirea*: Nationalism in a Spiritual Guise", in Kenneth Jowitt, ed., *Social Change in Romania, 1860-1940. A Debate on Development in a European Nation*, Berkeley, University of California, Institute of International Studies, 1978, pp. 140-173.

[235] Francisco Veiga, *Istoria Gărzii de Fier, 1919-1941. Mistica ultranaționalismului*, trad. de Marian Ştefănescu, Bucureşti, Humanitas, 1995, pp. 152-182.

[236] Mircea Eliade, "Şi un cuvânt al editorului", in Nae Ionescu, *Roza vânturilor 1926-1933*, ed. de Dan Zamfirescu, Bucureşti, Roza Vânturilor, 1990 [1937, ed. de Mircea Eliade], pp. 421-444. A dimension somewhat overemphasized in Philip Vanhaelemeersch, *A Generation "Without Beliefs" and the Idea of Experience in Romania, 1927-1934*, Boulder, Colo., East European Monographs, 2007.

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politics on solid bases of ethnic peculiarities,[237] hard to distinguish from Ionescu's own theories of the "organic state" (occasionally argued by the means of a paradoxical interpretation of the discipline of Logic, as applied to collective entities)[238] or from the related design of an "ethnocratic state", advanced by Nichifor Crainic as a full-blown development of *Gândirist* theoretical presuppositions.[239] When arguing against Manoilescu the case of social development based on peasant economic wisdom and faithful to the traditionalist vision first elaborated by M. Eminescu in the 1870's,[240] Vulcănescu was building upon his vast project of getting Romanian society to the fold of "economic medievalism", as a prerequisite for a further healthy evolution.[241] Taking very often a critical view of Liberal Party oligarchic economic practices,[242] radical Right thinking nevertheless considered – also in continuation to Eminescu's doctrine – that the protectionist turn taken by national policies of development at the end of the previous century had been an inescapable demand of the age and continued to act as a predicament of the present.[243] The basic traditionalist inspiration of Romanian intellectual fascism emerges in full light from the works of a second ranking figure

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237 Idem, "Creație etnică şi gândire politică" [1933], in *Meşterul Manole. Studii de etnologie şi mitologie*, ed. de Magda Ursache şi Petru Ursache, Cluj-Napoca, Eikon, 2007 [1992], pp. 401-403; Idem, *Textele "legionare" şi despre "românism"*, ed. de Mircea Handoca, Cluj-Napoca, Dacia, 2001.

238 George Voicu, *Mitul Nae Ionescu*, Bucureşti, Ars Docendi, 2000; Nae Ionescu, *Curs de istoria logicii*, ed. de Marin Diaconu, Bucureşti, Humanitas, 1993 [1941], pp. 57-79.

239 Ornea, *Anii treizeci*, pp. 241-264.

240 Vulcănescu, Manoilescu, *Tendințele tinerei generații*.

241 Mircea Vulcănescu, *"Spre un nou medievalism economic". Scrieri economice*, ed. de Marin Diaconu, Bucureşti, Compania, 2009.

242 Idem, "Carteluri, politică liberală şi dictatură economică" [1935], in *"Spre un nou medievalism economic"*, pp. 245-249.

243 Ion Veverca, *Niculae Şuțu*, Bucureşti, Ed. Asociației Generale a Economiştilor din România, 1936, p. 130; Idem, *Naționalism economic*, Bucureşti, Cartea Românească, n. d. [1941].

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like Nicolae Roşu, who presented his involvement in the revolution of the Right as the final product of a nationalist opposition against western democratic ideas, started already at the time of the 1848 revolution and unfolded inescapably through several successive stages.[244]

The year 1927 brought, thus, only the last departure marking the fractured development of traditionalist ideological pleading in Romania, itself staying in continuation to the previous evolution of the same kind underwent by political and ideological conservatism. The national-Christian political orientation, organized as a party in 1923 and augmented by the fusion with a "national-agrarian" one – of Transylvanian origins – in 1935, enjoyed a brief tenure, as a Carolist puppet, between December 1937 and February 1938,[245] in order to act as a recruiting ground for the personnel of the Antonescu regime, after January 1941.[246] Based on a harshly exclusionary view of the ethnic nation and drawing its electoral support from socially disseminated anti-Semitism – in the same way as fascism tended to capitalize primarily on backwardness and regional disparities[247] – it can best be characterized as a form of "extreme Right", against the radical and revolutionary orientation of its fascist rival.[248] Having the anti-Semitic ideologue A. C. Cuza as a leader (in partnership with Octavian

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[244] Nicolae Roşu, *Dialectica naționalismului*, Bucureşti, Cultura Națională, n. d. [1938], p. 201.

[245] Paul A. Shapiro, "Prelude to Dictatorship in Romania: the National-Christian Party in Power, December 1937-February 1938", in *Canadian-American Slavic Studies* 8: 1, 1074, pp. 45-88.

[246] *Ibid.*, p. 46; Nagy-Talavera, *The Green Shirts and the Others*, p. 309.

[247] Eugen Weber, "The Men of the Archangel", in *Journal of Contemporary History* 1: 1, 1966, pp. 101-126. Compare Miklós Lackó, "The Social Roots of Hungarian Fascism: the Arrow Cross", in Stein Ugelvik Larsen at al., eds., *Who Were the Fascists. Social Roots of European Fascism*, Bergen, Universitetsforlaget, 1980, pp, 395-416.

[248] Roger Eatwell, Noël O' Sullivan, eds., *The Nature of the Right: European and American Politics and Political Thought since 1789*, London, Pinter, 1989.

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Goga after 1935) it traced its origins to a party acting under a "national democratic" label and founded in 1910 – on the basis of the collaboration between Cuza and the traditionalist historian Nicolae Iorga –, itself originated as a movement in 1906. Starting from within the frame of oppositional conservatism critical of Liberal Party policies of modernization and of their fortyeighter (half-imagined) pedigree,[249] Iorga evolved towards a criticism of local and European modernity much akin to that of the Hungarian Gyula Szekfü,[250] also maintaining an always problematic relation to the culture of anti-Semitism.[251] Although dissociating himself from Cuza in 1922[252] and getting estranged, gradually, from the growing political radicalism (at the cost of his assassination by the Iron Guard in 1940), Iorga stood as the most powerful voice of traditionalist nationalism between Eminescu and the 1920's and contributed most extensively to preparing the ground for the intellectual conservative revolution captured to its benefit by fascism.

Getting prominence after 1900 due to its elaboration by Iorga, Cuza and their associates,[253] the traditionalist trend coming from Eminescu had emerged from within *Junimist* intellectual conservatism and stood close to the Conservative Party up to 1906. The representatives of *Gândirea* – acting as the intellectual counterpart of the national-Christian political trend – claimed continuity to it, while at the same time marking their departure from it by reference to their fundamental addition of a religious element.[254] They did so even when adopting ideological

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[249] Iorga, "Partidele politice în România în secolul al XIX-lea".

[250] Janos, *The Politics of Backwardness in Hungary*, pp. 267-269; Irene Raab Epstein, *Gyula Szekfü: a Study in the Political Bases of Hungarian Historiography*, New York, Garland, 1987.

[251] Radu Ioanid, "Nicolae Iorga and Fascism", in *Journal of Contemporary History* 27: 3, 1992, pp. 467-492.

[252] Heinen, *Legiunea "Arhanghelul Mihail"*, pp. 99-104.

[253] Ornea, *Sămănătorismul*.

[254] Nichifor Crainic, *Puncte cardinale în haos*, ed. de Constantin Schifirneț, Bucureşti, Albatros, 1998 [1936], p. 78.

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stances hardly recognizable as genuinely traditionalist. This is, for sure, the case of the paradoxical attempt of Radu Dragnea to adjudicate a part of fortyeighter culture on the side of *Gândirism*, which drove him not only to invoking wholeheartedly standard "bourgeois" and liberal values but also to making extensive use of the categories of Marxist historical sociology, filtered through a close reading of Dobrogeanu-Gherea and Zeletin.[255] This most surprising proof that the categories of Marxist thinking could be used, at the time, to support various and competing ideological stances must certainly be placed alongside the occurrences of the same sort mentioned in the previous section of the article.

Otherwise, the role of the *Junimist* conservative cultural movement as an ideological springboard of traditionalism – and, as such, as the distant harbinger of fascism – is certainly more difficult to clarify, although it was asserted by older[256] and recent[257] historians in much the same fashion. Zeletin firmly placed conservatism on the side of the cultural reaction against modernity, largely on account of its criticism of the modernization process impelled by Romanian liberalism.[258] Lovinescu closely followed him,[259] but at the same time claimed the legacy of *Junimism* on his behalf in matters of literature and literary criticism, therefore displaying the tendency to identify in the conservative aesthetic doctrine – resting on the demand to dissociate art from militant social

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255 Dragnea, *Mihail Kogălniceanu*; Victor Rizescu, "Cum poate fi citit Kogălniceanu? Un studiu despre istorie şi ideologie", in Victor Rizescu, coord., *Ideologii româneşti şi est-europene*, Bucureşti, Ed. Cuvântul, 2008, pp. 257-296.

256 Z. Ornea, *Junimea şi junimismul*, Bucureşti, Ed. Eminescu, 1975; Idem, *Sămănătorismul*; Idem, *Tradiționalism şi modernitate*; Idem, *Anii treizeci*.

257 Marta Petreu, *De la Junimea la Noica. Studii de cultură românească*, Iaşi, Polirom, 2011.

258 Zeletin, *Bughezia română*, pp. 245-287.

259 Lovinescu, *Istoria civilizației*, vol. 2: *Forțele reacționare*.

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rhetoric, in order to protect it from demagoguery – the function of promoting rationalist opposition against political mysticism.[260]

In non-western contexts best epitomized by the East European periphery before the Second World War, traditionalist nationalism rests on two interconnected statements. First, an assertion of the organic community of the nation – with its cultural links resting primarily in peasant traditions – against modern individualist societal association, that can eventually evolve towards an overarching collectivist political thought, claiming the sharp primacy of national interests over individual rights;[261] second, a particularist interpretation of the historicist stance, implying the idea of the incommensurability of cultures and social forms along a progressing (or modernizing) historical trajectory.[262] The Romanian belated counterpart of Russian Slavophile nationalism of the 1830's and 1840's (and of the Polish national messianism featuring in the same era[263]), embodied in the 1920's by the cultural movement of *Gândirea*, displayed as full-blown both these defining traits of the ideological pattern in question, that were to be transmuted into subtler and more elaborated conceptions of cultural relativism by the (half-)"modernist" fellow travelers of the fascist revolution.[264] The Eminescu-Iorga

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[260] Idem, *T. Maiorescu şi posteritatea lui critică*, Bucureşti, Casa Şcoalelor, 1943.

[261] Arthur O. Lovejoy, "The Meaning of Romanticism for the Historian of Ideas", in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 2: 3, 1941, pp. 257-278; Sternhell, *The Anti-Enlightenment Tradition*.

[262] Georg G. Iggers, *The German Conception of History*, sec. ed., Middletown, Conn., Wesleyan University Press, 1983; Robert D'Amico, "Historicism", in Aviezer Tucker, ed., *A Companion to the Philosophy of History and Historiography*, Oxford, Blackwell, 2009, pp. 243-252.

[263] Andrzej Walicki, *Russia, Poland and Universal Regeneration. Studies on Russian and Polish Thought of the Romantic Epoch*, Notre Dame, Ind., University of Notre Dame Press, 1991.

[264] Alexandra Laignel-Lavastine, *Filozofie şi naţionalism. Paradoxul Noica*, trad. de Emanoil Marcu, Bucureşti, Humanitas, 1998; Claude Karnoouh, *Inventarea poporului-naţiune*, trad. de Teodora Dumitru, Cluj-Napoca, Ideea Design & Print, 2011.

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brand of traditionalism vacillated over the same issues, but nevertheless considered the village as superior to the city, dubbed modernity – and not only the Romanian, distorted variety of it – as inferior to medieval arrangements, condemned western-style constitutionalism as inherently corrosive of local ways and vindicated a reinfusion of bygone archaism into the late XIXth and early XXth centuries social texture.[265]

By contrast to the three radicalizing stages of traditionalist thinking, *Junimism* was built on a characteristic fusion between organicist conceptions of the social body – mainly of German Romantic provenance and skeptical about the implications of increasing commercialization of human relations – and the view of sociological evolutionism – taken primarily from British sources and resting of solid individualist principles.[266] Very close, in terms of their theoretical vision, to the Polish liberal "positivists" of the 1870's and the 1880's[267] – and occasionally claiming to act as the authorized voice of liberalism in Romania[268] – the evolutionist conservatives never wavered about their belief in gradual progress on the basis of acculturation. When measured with the help of the "rationalist-nationalist" axis,[269] their philosophy – originated with an article by Titu

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[265] Dumitru Murăraşu, *Naţionalismul lui Eminescu*, ed. de Oliviu Tocaciu, Bucureşti, Pacifica, 1994 [1932]; Nicolae Iorga, *Originea şi sensul democraţiei*, Vălenii de Munte, Datina Românească, n. d. [1930], pp. 50-51.

[266] Maurice Mandelbaum, *History, Man and Reason. A Study in Nineteenth-century Thought*, Baltimore, The John Hopkins Press, 1971, pp. 41-50, 163-92; J. W. Burrow, *The Crisis of Reason: European Thought, 1848-1914*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2000, pp. 68-146.

[267] Jedlicki, *A Suburb of Europe*, pp. 205-291; Porter, "The Social Nation and Its Futures".

[268] Titu Maiorescu, "Pentru restabilirea şcolilor normale" [1872], in *Discursuri parlamentare*, ed. de Constantin Schifirneţ, Bucureşti, Albatros, vol. 1, 2001 [1897, 1915], p. 90.

[269] Shapiro, *Rationalism and Nationalism in Russian Nineteenth-century Political Thought*.

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Maiorescu of 1868[270] and best encapsulated in a book by Constantin Rădulescu-Motru of 1904[271] – emerges as very close to the first position. Equally opposed to the "oriental barbarism" of traditional society and to the distorted modernization that had come to replace it in Romania, they pleaded for a reinfusion of authenticity in all spheres of national life, while always refraining from pointing to nativist values as incongruent with western ways. Even when discovering, in the 1930's, the Soviet, Italian and German-type reorganizing of society on the totalitarian pattern as an inescapable horizon of world-wide modernization, Rădulescu-Motru staunchly rejected religious-based traditionalism as a valid political recipe of the age[272] (and in spite of the fact that he had previously abandoned Maiorescu's autonomist conception of art for the opposite, militant one, that unavoidably involved some degree of traditionalist overtones when advocating literary creations targeting the peasant social landscape[273]). At the same time, however, his readiness to drop out individualism in favor of a fully fledged communitarian view, divorcing the idea of nationalism from its XIXth century, Wilsonian-style cohabitation with liberalism,[274] was predicated on a long-standing theoretical inconsistency of the school in this respect, already manifest in utterances of the 1880's.[275]

Classical Russian westernizers of the first half of the XIXth century made their anti-Slavophile case by drawing on

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[270] Titu Maiorescu, "În contra direcției de astăzi în cultura română" [1868], in *Critice*, ed. de Domnica Filimon, Bucureşti, Elion, 2000 [1908], pp. 161-170.

[271] Constantin Rădulescu-Motru, "Cultura română şi politicianismul" [1904], in *Personalismul energetic şi alte scrieri*, ed. de Gh. Al. Cazan şi Gheorghe Pienescu, Bucureşti, Ed. Eminescu, 1984. pp. 1-104.

[272] Idem, *Românismul*, ed. de Marin Aiftincă, Bucureşti, Garamond, 1996 [1936, 1939], pp. 46-47, 93-99.

[273] Idem, "Idealurile sociale şi arta" [1900], in *Personalismul energetic şi alte scrieri*, ed. de Gh. Al. Cazan şi Gheorghe Pienescu, Bucureşti, Ed. Eminescu, 1984. pp. 743-753.

[274] Idem, *Românismul*, pp. 43-45.

[275] Rosetti, "Mişcarea socială la noi".

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the Hegelian conception of a linear universal history culminating in European modernity.[276] By doing so, they could not disentangle themselves entirely from the statist and collectivist implications of the Hegelian political philosophy. At the turn of the XIXth to the XXth centuries, the German dichotomous sociology of modernization resting on the comparison between the organic traditional community and the contractualist modern society – and drawing on Herderian Romantic sources – could easily slip into a celebration of the *Volksgemeinschaft* ready to be used by the conservative revolution of the 1920's.[277] Romanian evolutionist conservatives liked to pack Herder, Hegel and even Marx together in order to plead the wisdom of the "historicist" view – attentive to the demands of gradualist social evolution – against the "rationalist" drive to mechanical modernization which they blamed on the liberal political trend.[278] When rejecting the reactionary implications of the Romantic historical sociology and their manifestations in the local cultural context, Zeletin himself vindicated the veracity of the Marxist outgrowth of the same European current of thought, criticizing the conservatives and their followers as false interpreters of the basic historicist statements.[279] Writing towards the end of the pre-communist period, a disciple of Lovinescu – who occasionally pointed to state-induced

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[276] Siljak, "Between East and West: Hegel and the Origins of the Russian Dilemma".

[277] Arthur Mitzman, "Tönnies and German Society, 1887-1914: from Cultural Pessimism to the Celebration of the *Volksgemeinschaft*", in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 32: 4, 1971, pp. 507-524. Compare Reinhard Bendix, "Tradition and Modernity Reconsidered", in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 9: 3, 1967, pp. 292-346.

[278] Alexandru Papacostea, "Tradiționalism şi rațională" [1924], in *România politică. Doctrină, idei, figuri, 1907-1925*, ed. de Ştefan Zeletin, Bucureşti, Tipografia "Bucovina" I. E. Torouțiu, n. d. [1932], pp.287-303.

[279] Zeletin, "Romantismul german şi cultura critică română", p. 69.

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change as a necessary correction to social inertia[280] – compared the "rationalist" and the "historical" conceptions on equal footing,[281] also discovering that the Hegelian view had been used as a legitimating device, throughout the successive stages of Romanian modernization, by the promoters of rapid change and by the spokesmen of gradualism and tradition alike.[282] It can be argued that, much in the same fashion as Russian Hegelianism and the German XIXth century characteristic interpretation of sociological evolutionism, the Romanian vision of "organic change" acted as a slippery rhetoric that nourished the dynamics of indigenist nationalism and radical politics.

Junimism stood not only as the fountainhead of local traditionalism, but also as the third stage in the development of Romanian conservatism. Its oppositional self-identity, adopted already in the 1860's, squared well with a stubborn cosmopolitan stance, which implied a wholesale critique of surrounding realities by relying exclusively on western (evolutionist, organicist and historicist) social science. By so doing – and no matter their landholding fortunes, parliamentary representation and governmental tenures – the "new conservatives" took over the social role performed by the spokesmen of fortyeighter liberalism over the preceding decades. Accepting the regime of civil equality introduced in 1858 as a consummated fact and decrying the lot of the peasantry under the burden of fiscal pressures increasingly subservient to bureaucratic interests,[283] they stood at the origins of the entire "critical culture" and of its various

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[280] Tudor Vianu, "Statul ca îndreptar" [1924], in Iordan Chimet, coord., *Dreptul la memorie*, Cluj-Napoca, Dacia, vol. 4, 1993, pp. 176-191.

[281] Idem, *Raționalism şi istorism (studiu de filozofia culturii)*, Bucureşti, Tiparul Universitar, 1938.

[282] Idem, *Influența lui Hegel în cultura română*, Bucureşti, Monitorul Oficial şi Imprimeriile Statului, 1933.

[283] Maiorescu, "Asupra reformei legii pentru instrucțiunea publică".

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modes of social criticism, that were to be put to work for left-wing and right-wing purposes to the same extent.

A certain continuity of conservative politics – on the platform of defending boyar economic and social interests – across the threshold of the 1860's is undeniable, and it was rightly perceived as such by late XIXth and early XXth century historical accounts with a liberal[284] or a populist[285] bent, as well as by social critics of nationalist[286] and socialist[287] stripes. Still, one can discern no less significant differences between the political orientation advancing an unclear demand for social and institutional gradualism on the basis of *Junimist* evolutionist rhetoric and the open defense of privileges exhibited by Barbu Catargiu and his associates in 1848 and over the subsequent years.[288] The *protipendada*-serving discourse articulated in the second half of the XVIIIth century – and exhibiting in 1770 and 1782 vocal anti-Phanariot statements delivered from the standpoint of the upper boyardom of both Principalities[289] – was marked, in the 1820's, by a transformation closely resembling the departure of fortyeighter liberalism from the *cărvunari* ideology. A new political vocabulary – featuring for the first time in a letter dispatched in 1823 by the future Moldavian prince Mihail Sturdza to a Russian diplomatic representative[290] – was acquired in close association to a

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284 Xenopol, *Istoria partidelor politice*.

285 Radu Rosetti, *Pentru ce s-au răsculat țăranii?*, ed. de Z. Ornea, Bucureşti, Ed. Eminescu, 1987 [1908]; Ibrăileanu, *Spiritul critic în cultura românească*.

286 A. C. Cuza, *Țăranii şi clasele dirigente*, Iaşi, n. p., 1895.

287 Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea, "Neoiobăgia" [1910], in *Opere complete*, ed. de Ion Popescu-Puțuri et al., Bucureşti, Ed. Politică, vol. 4, 1978.

288 Stahl, *Gânditori şi curente*, pp. 104-110.

289 Brătianu, *Sfatul domnesc şi adunarea stărilor*, pp. 193-202; Georgescu, *Istoria ideilor politice româneşti*, p. 95.

290 Anastasie Iordache, *Originile şi constituirea Partidului Conservator din România*, Bucureşti, Paideia, 1999, pp. 50-52.

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growing consciousness of the western cultural connection. A timid political rhetoric pointing to the wisdom of organic change and taking inspiration from contemporary European discourses of the Right was put forward accordingly,[291] in conjunction with a new legitimating historical account scrutinizing the depths of the medieval past in order to argue – against the populist history advanced by Bălcescu – the primacy of boyar property rights and of feudal arrangements over peasant smallholding tenure.[292] A belated indigenization of the Phanariot reformist discourse stood as something of a buffer between the two contending ideological camps.[293]

Unlike the Russian and the (much less prominent) Polish trends of the sort, early Romanian conservatism defending the establishment did not have to struggle on two fronts, by fighting at the same time liberal challenges and Romantic retrogressive (and right-wing) utopias with a populist ring.[294] It shared the predicament of its Hungarian counterpart in this respect, less the latter's low-level flirtation with precisely such Romantic ideas, against the liberal westernizer drive.[295] No political orientation with a conservative label existed in the quasi-homogenous peasant society of XIXth century Bulgaria.[296] It is maybe of some significance, however, that contemporary Serbia – which

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[291] Xenopol, *Istoria partidelor politice*, pp. 260-262; Iordache, *Originile şi constituirea Partidului Conservator*, pp. 93-126.

[292] Stahl, *Gânditori şi curente*, loc. cit.

[293] *Memoriile principelui Nicolae Şuţu*, ed. şi trad. de Georgeta Penelea Filitti, Bucureşti, Ed. Fundaţiei Culturale Române, 1997 [1899]; Andrei Pippidi, "Nicolas Soutzo (1798-1871) et la fin du régime phanariote dans les Principautés roumaines", in *Hommes et idées du Sud-Est européen à l'aube de l'âge moderne*, Bucarest-Paris, Académie Roumaine-Éditions du C.N.R.S., 1980, pp. 315-338.

[294] Pipes, *Russian Conservatism and Its Critics*; Jedlicki, *A Suburb of Europe*.

[295] Dénes, "The Value Systems of Liberals and Conservatives in Hungary".

[296] Crampton, *Bulgaria, 1878-1918*.

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went out of the Ottoman Empire with the same social structure – got endowed with a political family of the kind from scratch, in the shape of an (informal) oligarchic "constitutionalist" party, created in the 1830's in order to oppose the original naked arbitrariness of princely rule and dissolved in the 1850's under the combined attacks of western-inspired liberalism and Slavophile nationalism with a strong Russian connection.[297] It is undeniable, otherwise, that a heavier recourse to regional comparisons can lead to disclosing important overlapping meanings of ideological developments in the countries of Eastern Europe before the Second World War. The present paper relied on such accumulated comparative wisdom in order to identify – or better circumscribe, against the mainstream or recently established interpretations – four departures in the evolution of liberalism (one of them issuing into the muddled compound of corporatism), three forms of left-wing discourse, six varieties of conservative and traditionalist political thought and seven different ideological uses of Marxist sociology in relation to Romanian social realities of the period.

[297] Stoianovich, "The Pattern of Serbian Intellectual Evolution".

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When considered in relation to the western sources of modern social and political thought, ideological development in the countries of the East European borderlands can be described as having consisted primarily in a dynamics of acculturation or as having been driven mainly by a thread of reactions to the pressures of modernization. Historical accounts taking the first path will focus on the process by which ideological trends of western provenance have been entrenched – on the basis of contextual adjustments and after suffering corresponding distortions – in local cultural milieus, thus contributing to the refashioning of political cultures inherited from old regimes and traditional societies. When taking the second path, the historian will bring to the forefront a consideration of the historical nexus between the growing consciousness of living within the horizon of modernity displayed by educated strata and their increasing self-understanding as both integral parts of the global society and segments of local social units affected by the interconnectedness of international life.

Ideology, Nation and Modernization takes precisely such a twofold approach to the Romanian relevant record. While drawing in outline a typology of ideological patterns issued from the adoption and elaboration in the local setting of the various parts of the modern political spectrum, it also aims at disclosing the contours of an intellectual structure induced by the growing perception of the disruptive changes brought about by modernization under the impact of western and world capitalist influences. As an exercise in the archeology of ideas, it has as its main objective that of bringing to light the pre-communist critical sociologies of the elites, discovered as closely connected with the sociological evaluations of the successive stages of the modernizing process and also as staying at the very core of the entire effort to come to terms with the predicament of modernization.

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